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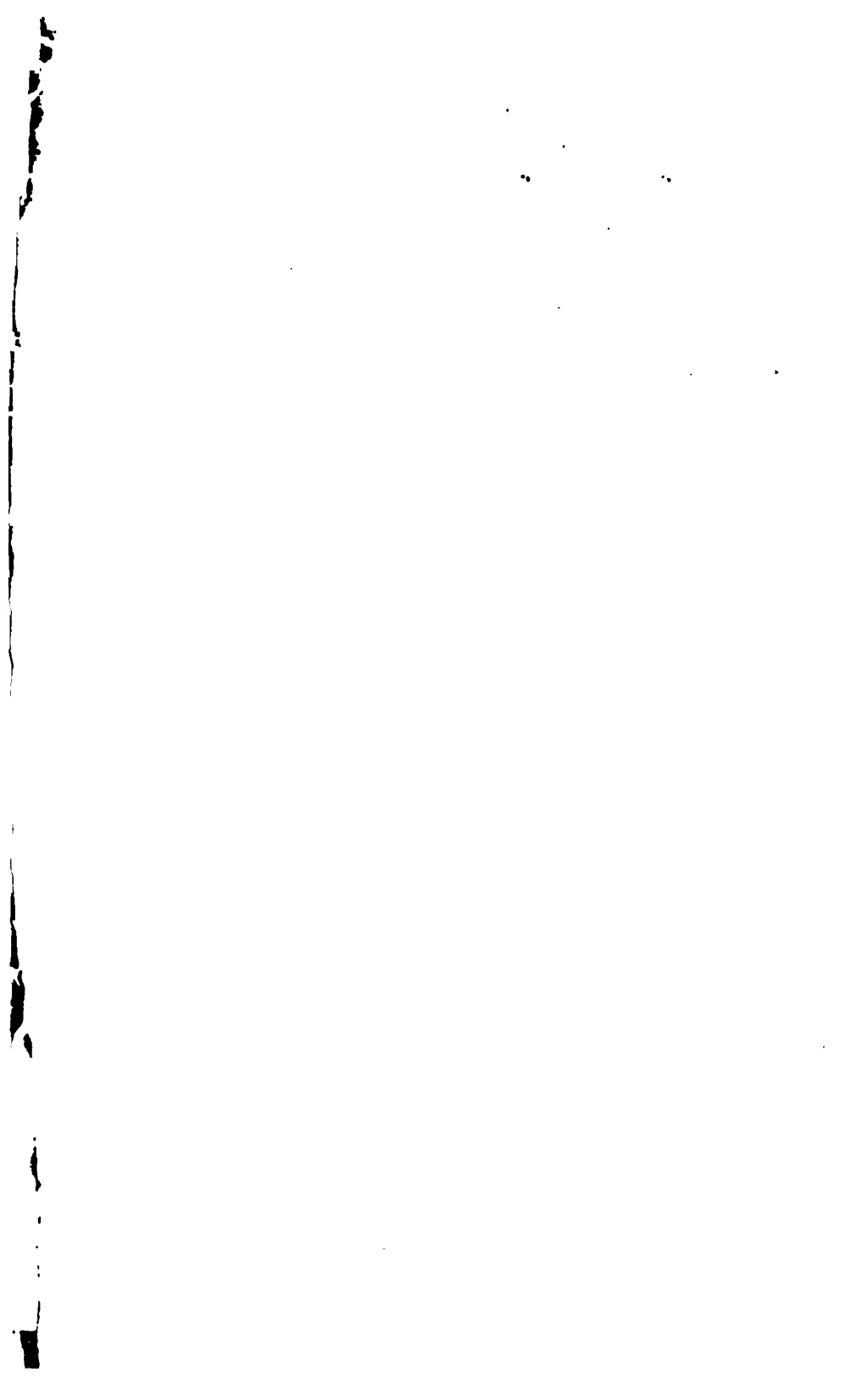
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THE LIFE OF FATHER IGNATIUS O.S.B.

THE MONK OF LLANTHONY

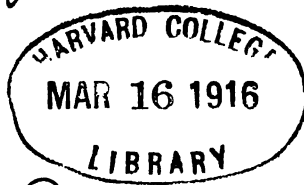
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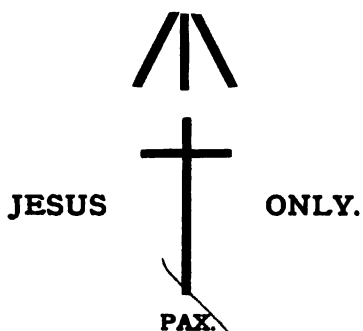
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First Published in 1904

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**TO EVERY FELLOW-SOUL WITHOUT DISTINCTION
THIS VOLUME IS DEDICATED,
IN THE HOPE THAT IT MAY INTEREST SOME,
COMFORT MANY, AND HELP ALL.**

PREFACE

THE Author desires that I should write a Preface to this book, and I am glad to comply with her request, because it gives me the opportunity of preparing the reader for the perusal of its extraordinary and incredible contents.

To the reader who is also a believer in our Lord Jesus Christ, I present the following Divine Words for his reverent consideration :—

“The base things of the world, and things which are despised, hath God chosen ; and things which *are not*, to bring to naught things which *are*, that no flesh should glory in His Presence.”

“Now we have received, not the spirit of the World, but the Spirit which is of God, that we might know the things which are freely given to us of God.”

As to the supernatural events recorded, I desire to say that whether the reader believes the statements regarding them or does *not* believe them, it is no concern of mine. I simply give them to the Author because I believe it is our Lord's will and for His glory that I should do so. People will believe them or not as they are taught of God. I have not knowingly mis-stated or over-stated these things, which at all events I myself regard as “wonderful works of God.” The time has come to give my witness respecting them, and “The God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ knoweth that I lie not.”

By this book may our Lord permit that His Most Holy Name may be glorified, many of His people comforted, and that many who sit in darkness may see the Great Light of His Peace, and the supreme Joy of His Salvation.

IGNATIUS OF JESUS, O.S.B.,

Monk.

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THE MONK OF LLANTHONY

CHAPTER I

"A SOWER WENT OUT TO SOW"

"Hark ! I hear the voice of one
Who in the desert cries,
Prepare the way for David's Son,
The Lord of earth and skies."

TO those who *think*, to every man and woman of average intelligence, the purport of this volume will speak for itself. They will take it for what it is—the faithful life-story of the Monk of Llanthony, that untiring Sower of the Seed Divine, whose mere name has become almost the expression of what should surely be the greatest of all heroism—the negative, the unapplauded, and the misunderstood.

To the soldier who dies sword in hand, the stimulus of emotion, the merciful exhilaration of action, are at least vouchsafed. The picture is rich in suggestive incident. It carries with it the glow of battle, the rush of the charge, and perhaps the hurried "passing" of a score of comradesouls. But what of this other, the black silhouette of the Man of Silence, who in the cold grey light of a nameless poverty goes forth to spend his lifetime amongst the sick and wounded on the burning plains of Humanity? What of the Monk, the Solitary? Is he not also a soldier of the King, though he wears serge instead of khaki, and carries no deadlier weapon than the similitude of a wooden cross?

Even to imagine, how much more to *realise*, the supreme significance of self-dedication to such a life, touches very nearly on the impossible; yet it is to this work of spiritual ambulance, to the infinite charity of Conversion, that Ignatius, Monk of the British Church, has already devoted over forty years of strenuous consecutive labour, literally pouring into an ungrateful cause the first-fruits of an intellectual abundance, which in itself alone would have sufficed to set him amongst the dwellers in high places, so far as a brilliant career in this world is concerned.

On the relative merits or demerits of the life monastic there will always be a divided opinion. The mundane protest that it is a premeditative waste of God's best gifts; the spiritual, that it is the ideal application of them. Be this as it may, these pages are not intended to interpret a chorus of conflicting voices. Their purpose is to relate, rather than argue, and they are penned from the simple standpoint of the absolute sincerity of *one* monk's vocation, plus its result, which even his detractors are honest enough to underline as emphatic and world-wide.

Those who are actually acquainted with the Right Reverend Father, either personally or by the medium of his Missions, will appreciate the magnitude of the task it is my privilege to attempt, in offering to the public an approximate outline of a life which, from its unusual surroundings and restless sequence of *incredible* events, is more likely to read as the fantastic plot-weaving of some old-time romance, than what it really is—a monumental page in English Church History.

From the very outset of my work I have had to face one of the fiery trials of the pen—the temptation of an exhaustive overflow of material. Grudgingly, but of necessity, whole sheaves of valuable details have been left by the wayside, in the interest of the book as a whole, and to limit its contents to the possibilities of a single volume. Added to this, the very remarkable and many-sided personality of the actor in this strange one-man drama has in itself been a challenge to the most impossible

of all life-studies—*word portraiture*; in other words, the problem of the unanswerable.

To my own particular way of thinking, this is a fashion of gauntlet which might well be left to lie and gather rust. Nothing to my mind is more unsatisfactory, or so impertinent, as individual appreciation. It is so easy to dash in the bold broad lines, so difficult even to suggest the fine intermediate ones, on which the faithfulness of the likeness almost entirely depends. What is, after all, the most expert character-analysis but the elaborate cream-skimming from some miserable little earthen vessel of human vagary—*impression*?

That a single-handed monk should hold throughout all Christendom a complete monopoly which he has gained and sustained through his own unaided efforts, and in the teeth of persistent persecution both from Church and State, is a living testimony to the power and faith of the inner man, under Divine suggestion and the overshadowing of an Almighty purpose. It is one thing, however, to admit an acknowledged fact, quite another to explain it.

Carpi, the astute cardinal-statesman, thus speaks of his contemporary, the indomitable Loyola. "This Ignatius," says his Eminence, "has driven in a nail which no man will ever succeed in drawing out." Crude and half-hearted as this tribute may sound, I can offer none more appropriate to the twentieth-century namesake of this sublime leader, to the modern pioneer of an equally great cause—the upheaval of every rotten barrier raised by human intervention (misnamed orthodoxy) between the Creator and the creature, the Redeemer and the already redeemed.

Viewed through a closer lens, the Ignatius of to-day may be described as a brilliant antithesis, an embodiment of contrasts in the shape of contradictory parallels and the overlapping of opposed qualities. He is at once the fervent Catholic and the Bible Christian, the advanced Ritualist and the homely Evangelical, the rippling humorist and the master of pathos. But through all, and above all, he is essentially the "Priest for ever." There can be no two

opinions as to the earnestness of his intentions, or the stability of his anchorage in the harbour of his belief.

In the devout and genial Abbot of Llanthony the man and the monk are indissolubly one, and the bent of his life a perpetual love-labour, for his Master, his Monastery, the shrine of unceasing adoration, and his Missions—those magic nets in which so many drifting souls have already been drawn to shore.

Like most dreamers of great dreams who have lived to see, if only in part, the fulfilment of their hearts' desire, the Reverend Father Ignatius is supersensitive on the subject of the personal element. Of his work, or indeed on any topic of religious or social moment, it is easy to induce him to speak at length, and he does so with the zeal of conviction and the knowledge of one who has mastered the argument from both sides; but of himself, of Joseph Leycester Lyne, he has comparatively little to tell—some fugitive recollections of childhood both sweet and bitter, and the often recurring mention of a dearly loved mother, now gone before. Then the rest is all of "Jesus only," Llanthony, and his Message—the great message of awakening which he carries from time to time to the heavy sleepers in the outer world.

Nevertheless, it is wholly to the kindly patience and courtesy of the Monk of Llanthony himself that I am indebted for the entire material of this book, so far as its statistical value is concerned. Of its more abstract and personal sidelights I am prepared to claim the sole responsibility, and notably of this opening chapter, which I have specially begged the Reverend Father to consider as altogether beyond the pale of his jurisdiction. I have to thank him—and I do so very gratefully—for a most generous gift of time, strength, and interest, and above all for having made in my favour an exception to what I feared might have been a prohibitive rule of reticence.

This is by no means the first time that his many spiritual children have expressed an earnest wish that the strange story of their dear Father's life might receive its due recognition in the form of a comprehensive volume, but up

to the present he has not seen his way to comply with their request. Indeed, he only now does so, on the urgent representation that such a publication would be an additional offering to the Master in whose service he has so faithfully borne the burden and heat of the day.

I think it may interest my readers to know that this work has been compiled at Llanthony, at the very gates of the Abbey itself, and within reach of no other sounds than the voices of Nature and the Monastery bell. So complete an absorption in the atmosphere of its surroundings has afforded me the most convincing of all opportunities—the personal one—for judging of the spirituality of the life within this mountain home of prayer. It has also brought me face to face with the reality of its simplicity. Only one small spot in all the monastic precincts suggests, or, more accurately speaking, proclaims the presence of riches, and that is the sanctuary of the Church. This is the Monk of Llanthony's treasure-house, the precious alabaster box which he and his children break so lovingly and ungrudgingly over the feet of their Divine Guest.

Here, indeed, is a dream of flowers, the throb of lights, the waft of incense—a warm sense of beauty which more than compensates the impression of the silent cloisters that lie but a step beyond, in the shadow of an unqualified obedience, and the abandonment of every human inclination, satisfaction, and possession.

So far as possible, I have striven to invoke the “ Llanthony spirit ” upon every detail of this imperfect tribute to its Superior and Founder. Each chapter bears the heading of some familiar watchword from the Book of Life—his inseparable companion. Every little accompanying stanza is the child of his own pen. Some of these fugitive verses are blossoms from the garland of “ Llanthony Mission Hymns,” but a great many are derived from a manuscript collection kindly placed at my disposal, and also from a tiny volume entitled “ The Christian Seasons poetically illustrated ” by Joseph Leycester Lyne—a work which was both written and published by the author at the age of fifteen.

I am well aware that, to the thinkers of advanced "modern thoughts," there are several chapters in this volume which are likely to appear altogether beyond the prospect of belief, by reason of their supernatural significance. It is not my intention to defend what is beyond defence, or to seek to justify what I believe to be above justification. I would only commend to this category of readers the digestion of the following simple thought: Nowhere in our Bible (the Christian's Oracle) are we told that the "peace of God" is the only Divine attribute which "passeth understanding"; whereas we *are* told, and most emphatically, that with God all things are possible, even to the removing of mountains and the dividing of the boundless seas. Surely if so wonderful a promise is worthy "of all men to be believed," it cannot be so impossible to imagine that a faithful servant, whose life-service of sacrifice must have made him inexpressibly *dear* to his Master, may not at times, and for some great end, be permitted also to draw *near* to Him—even very, very near!

CHAPTER II

“A LITTLE CHILD SHALL LEAD THEM ”

“Softly sing that Name so tender,
Many a trembling one is here :
Only tenderness can draw them,
And they are so very dear.”

ON the 7th day of May 1835, and in the picturesque little church of Cookham-on-Thames, was celebrated what was destined to prove a very significant ceremony—the marriage of the parents of the Monk of Llanthony. The contracting parties were at the time described as Miss Louisa Genevieve Leycester, of White Place, Berks, a member of the well-known Cheshire family the Leycesters of Tabley (represented for centuries by the successive Barons and Baronets of that name), and Mr. Francis Lyne, the descendant of a Cornish branch of an originally Welsh tree, and himself a much-respected merchant of the City of London.

Of this marriage—an ideally happy one—there were seven children, four sons and three daughters; and of the former, Joseph Leycester, known in religion as “Father Ignatius of Jesus,” was the eldest but one, being born in Trinity Square, London, on the 23rd of November 1837.

In Mr. Francis Lyne's Family Bible, now carefully preserved at Llanthony Abbey, occurs the following somewhat involved entry, concerning the date and manner of this child's baptism: “Joseph Leycester” (writes his father) “was *baptised* at All Hallow's, Barking, on the 29th of December 1837, by the Rev. Mr. White, and *christened* at Preston Church, Dorsetshire, by the Rev. H. H. Harington, on the 13th of March 1838. Under this date (March 13, 1838), the Register being left in arrear for the month, he

was registered at All Hallow's, Barking, by Mr. White, on the 27th of April 1838." There is no record extant, or obtainable, either as to the reason or necessity for this second supplementary rite, or the plea on which the defective registration of the first baptism was based. This being the case, and the Reverend Father himself naturally entertaining some scruples as to the absolute certainty of his having been validly baptized at all, he voluntarily underwent a conditional re-baptism at the hands of the Rev. Canon Prynne, Vicar of St. Peter's, Plymouth, shortly before his ordination to Deacon's Orders in Wells Cathedral at the close of the year 1860.

The above lengthy statement may seem a superfluous one, but in reality it is not so, inasmuch as the uncertainty attached to the Reverend Father's *infant* baptism has more than once been called in question (and notably by Cardinal Vaughan, Archbishop of Westminster) as the only obstacle to the validity of the Priestly Orders conferred on him in 1898 by Mar Timotheus, the "Archbishop and Metropolitan" for the Old Catholics of America.

Accepting the advice of two friends—both of whom were members of the Roman Catholic priesthood—Father Ignatius wrote to Canon Prynne and laid his case before him. In reply, he received on the 15th of September 1899, not only an affectionate personal letter, but the enclosure of an official baptismal certificate, of which the following is a faithful reproduction :—

"I hereby certify that I baptized J. Leycester Lyne conditionally at his request, in Advent 1860, as he had some scruples as to the certainty of his having been duly and validly baptized.

(Signed) G. R. PRYNNE,
Vicar of St. Peter's, Plymouth."

It was in the form of a very fragile and sensitive little child that the future "fisher of men" made his first baby steps across this world's stage. His was indeed one of

those strangely susceptible natures which are so delicate to manipulate, because so difficult to understand. To the little Leycester Lyne, every passing breath was a whirlwind, every dewdrop a shower of hail—at least during the opening years of his life; and even now, despite the self-repression and discipline of a long monastic training, the footprints of this highly-strung sensibility are still apparent. Time has only been able to change, not efface them altogether. What in the child might almost be termed a nervous weakness, in the man has become a spiritual strength—the strength that commands in others an irresistible response to the magnetism of its own indiscriminate sympathy.

It is possible that the atmosphere of his early home—a very representative one, according to the highest religious and moral standards of a day gone by—may have contributed to this unsatisfied sense of yearning for the unknown; still more probable that the shadow of predestination, then no bigger than a man's hand, was already beginning to steal across the dawn. Be this as it may, there is no doubt that the child-self of our great modern Evangelist was essentially peculiar, though at the same time a very lovable one. Partly owing to his natural sweetness of disposition, and also by reason of his delicate health, this winsome little personality held a very tender place in his parents' hearts, and especially in that of his mother, herself a beautiful embodiment of all that is gentlest and strongest in womanhood.

This partiality, however, aroused no jealousy on the part of the other members of the nursery circle. They too, though with the more limited vision of childhood, both saw and felt that this frail little brother was not altogether one of themselves, that his thoughts were not their thoughts, nor his ways quite like their own, and they tacitly accepted the distinction, even if they could not understand it.

The religious memories of Father Ignatius date back to very early days indeed. One of the first includes

the removal of his family to No. 6 Hunter Street, Brunswick Square, when he was only two years old, and the quaint glimmers of spiritual impressions which began to perplex his baby brain about that time. He recalls himself as a tiny white-shod, white-gloved boy, undergoing the equipment of his "Sunday best"—a ceremony which always preceded the gathering of the family party for the Sabbath walk to morning service. Then the church itself (St. Peter's, Regent Square) suggested a whole crowd of curious, weird imaginings. "This is God's house," his father would often remind him, as he installed his little son in the great grim pew; and with this solemn exhortation to discreet behaviour came also the natural deduction of childish logic. If this was God's house, God must live in it, just as his own father lived in *his* house, the comfortable home they had just quitted; but where was He? That was the question.

Long and earnestly did he look around for some sign of the Supreme Presence, but in vain. God was certainly not in any of the ugly high-backed pews, or in the organ-loft either, and he could plainly see there was no one in the pulpit, and only "the man in his nightgown" at the reading-desk. Where could He be? Then all at once the light broke in! Standing on tiptoe on the seat of that mysterious enclosure the old-fashioned pew, his eyes had caught the dusky outline of the ponderous gallery above, and the glory of the crimson cushions and festooned fringes which adorned its luxurious front row. How silly he had been! Why, of course God had chosen this lofty and select portion of His house for His own personal habitation!—and the little dreamer heaved a big sigh of relief at the solution of so mighty a problem, followed by many more of awestruck admiration at the magnificence of the Divine surroundings.

But as time went on, the signs of an unchildlike religious preoccupation became more and more apparent, and especially an unaccountable attraction for old-world usages, and all things suggestive of a life of separation from the interests and ambitions of ordinary modern-minded humanity. To see

a Quaker couple pass up the street, or watch some devout old Baptist woman on her way to chapel, with her Bible folded in her best handkerchief, were sources of intense pleasure to this extraordinary little being, and he would spend whole Sunday afternoons with his face pressed against the dining-room window, waiting and hoping for the smallest glimpse of these primitive passers-by. The visits to church were also productive of strange results. To be "a man in his nightgown," and preach to multitudes, became the absorbing aim of this four-year-old postulant, and it was to a congregation composed of his brothers and sisters, nursery chairs, and any other available article of furniture which he could contrive to heap together, that the first orations of the embryo Monk were delivered. "I must have crowds, crowds!" was his constant cry on these occasions, and in further simulation of a densely packed church, he would purposely leave so narrow a space for egress between the chairs, that those seated on them had the greatest difficulty in extricating themselves at the close of the proceedings. It was a matter of real distress to him when, with the cruel candour of childhood, one or other of his "congregation" would remind him that "after all it was only a game, and no fun at all to be so dreadfully squeezed." "You spoil my pleasure," would be his indignant reply, and then he would climb down from his pulpit, white-robed and dejected, but undaunted, and ready to resume his discourse at the very first opportunity.

Yet another of this strange little child's favourite occupations was to watch the steeple of Christ Church, Woburn Square, from a remote corner of the nursery window; and no amount of persuasion or scolding would induce him to abandon this unaccountable attraction, or even to explain it. Being of a very reserved and nervous temperament, he shrank from confiding, even to his mother, that this quaint old Gothic steeple was to him a mighty finger, and that he loved to see it pointing up to heaven, and silently calling on the dwellers in the great city to look up also, and follow its inspiration.

The links of childhood must be very strong though slender, for the Reverend Father tells me that to this day, when driving through London to and from his Mission services, he still loves to see that old steeple, and that he always does so with something between a smile and a sigh, so vividly does it recall the shadows and sunbeams of those old nursery days.

It may well be imagined that all these unusual sayings and doings on the part of so young and delicate a child ended by awakening a very natural astonishment and anxiety in his parents' minds. His father, a man of somewhat stolid and deliberate judgment, was inclined to resent what he feared might develop into a positively morbid tendency; but his mother, like one other sweet woman of old, kept all these things, and pondered them in her heart. Not, however, that at this time she could fully follow the direction whither the hand of her little child was unconsciously beckoning her onward and upward. It was only in later years, and when that same hand had grown worn and wasted in his Master's service, that her beloved Monk and son was permitted to draw her lovingly and reverently to stand beside himself at the foot of that Master's Cross.

There is a very pathetic element in the hushed and hallowed atmosphere with which Father Ignatius surrounds his mother's name and memory. As the little child, he would often, and in secret, choose her empty room as the most fitting shrine wherein to offer up his baby prayers and praises; and as the matured man, he still speaks of her patient devotion, her strong faithful love, as the holiest and most sustaining influence that his earthly life has known. Even now, as the one left to follow, the dream is with him still. It is her face, he says, that will be one of the first to greet him in the Better Land; her spirit that will be watching at the Golden Gate, when it is his turn to pass through.

In the Abbot's cell there are two priceless relics which no hands save his own may touch. One is a well-worn

Bible, bearing this simple little message from a silent pen: "For my dearest Leycester, when I am taken home." The other is her watch, and this also holds perpetual vigil by the Monk's bedside. In another part of the cell hangs a beautiful picture of the thorn-crowned Jesus, likewise a very precious echo from the home of long ago.

These souvenirs, and the thoughts they must invoke, are too sacred to approach in detail. Nevertheless, this chapter would be altogether incomplete did I omit to mention the very special corner in Llanthony Abbey set apart by its Abbot to his mother's memory. Here, beneath her portrait, which is enclosed in an illuminated framework of dedicatory texts, the fairest flowers bloom all the seasons round, and here also once in every year the lights are lighted, and a solemn Requiem is sung for the gentle soul whose anniversary occurs that day. This beautiful and impressive service is invariably numerously attended, not only as a personal tribute to "the one passed out of sight," but in many instances as a spontaneous and respectful note of sympathy to her son—the sleepless Watchman on the Narrow Way—to whom this function is a very sweet and restful moment in all the long hours of the busy Christian Year.

CHAPTER III

"AND THE CHILD GREW "

" He can look back on times gone by,
And think thereon with joy ;
His trials and his woes are changed
To bliss without alloy."

IT is instructive as well as refreshing to note that the early childhood of our future Abbot was beautifully exempt from any of those priggish tendencies which usually disfigure religious precocity. He was essentially a child and a boy too in everything but thought ; and what is still more delightful, he could be thoroughly naughty when so disposed. Not that these ungodly moments were many, as his nursery sobriquet "The Prince of Peace," and, later on, the school nickname of "Saintly Lyne," will best testify ; but they just sufficed to indicate a healthy ripple of old mortality, together with a strength of purpose which has long since been dedicated to a better cause. There is pathos as well as comedy in the contrition with which the Monk of Llanthony even now reverts to his quaint little peccadilloes, two of which in especial seem to sit heavy upon his soul as monuments of juvenile enormity.

The first occurred in the very peep of day, when, as "Master Lessie," the Ascetic of the Black Mountains might still be seen on his high chair at the nursery tea-table ; and the primary cause was a certain cup of milk which he declined to drink, on the ground that it was not warm enough to suit his fancy. Nurse, the local magnate, was appealed to, but in vain ; and on receiving her stereotyped admonition to "drink it up like a good boy," some little rebel demon rose within him, and he secretly determined to take

the law into his own hands. With the rapid power of deduction which even then must have been one of his peculiar characteristics, it did not take “Master Lessie” many minutes to combine a plan of action which would at once circumvent authority and gratify his own whim. How he managed to evade detection history does not reveal, but certain it is that he contrived to slip from his chair and push his teaspoon unobserved between the bars of the nursery fire. This he did with the practical intention of stirring his milk with it so soon as it should become effectually heated.

There was no thought of malice in this childish strategy. It was simply an assertion of independence in a mind too undeveloped to realise the possibility of consequences. The bowl of the spoon being actually in the fire, it soon reached a murderous state of heat, of which its owner was unaware. After a very few minutes, he withdrew it cautiously, and looked around for some suitable object on which to test its warmth-giving properties before experimenting on his own precious cup.

Unfortunately, his eyes lighted on the tiny bare arm of a three-months-old sister, who happened at that moment to be peacefully sleeping on the nurse’s lap. The inspiration was too obvious to be missed. He would warm Baby’s arm first, and the milk afterwards. It could not hurt her—babies could not feel; so, without waiting to reflect or question, he crept quietly to the infant’s side and laid the burning metal on her tender arm. What followed may be imagined, and to this hour the horror of that act of unconscious barbarity causes its perpetrator a heartfelt shudder. The cries of his victim, the smell of the cauterised flesh, together with the general panic, and the agonised appearance of his mother upon the scene, are only a few of the many details which still cause him actual suffering to recall. “But what hurt me most of all,” adds the Reverend Father, with the earnestness of conviction that waits even upon his lightest moments,—“what hurt me most was to see my sweet mother’s tears, to feel that *I* had caused them, and to hear her gentle words of

reproach—the only ones she uttered—“How *could* my darling Lessie do such a dreadful thing!”

His second misdemeanour, which, like its predecessor, leaves natural sparkles on the tracks of what might otherwise have been an unchildlike little life, occurred some two years later, and was altogether of a graver cast.

Like all small boys, whether of the saint or sinner denomination, Leycester Lyne at six years old was addicted to sweets. Indeed, as the faithful biographer, I am bound to add that it was through the familiar medium of the adhesive lollypop that Satan first got at him. The child was a constant visitor in his mother's room. It was to him the haven of all that was holy and restful, and often he would find his way there during her absence, to kneel and pray beside the great four-posted bed, or dream sweet day-dreams of the bright, fair presence which to him was the gentlest and most lovable of all on earth.

On one occasion, however, this very sanctuary was destined to be the scene of a sore temptation, before which he fell. The little Leycester must have been suffering from a virulent fit of the sweet-tooth that day, for the mere sight of a fourpenny-piece lying invitingly on the dressing-table was sufficient to whirl him head foremost over the weir. There came a single whisper from the “wrong side,” and under the delirious fascination of the sweet and sticky, he succumbed. The money slipped first into his hand, and from thence into his pocket.

It was the fiery impulse of a moment, and not until those fateful sweets had been bought and digested did the full significance of his action swoop down upon him. Then it came like a moral avalanche. He had broken God's Commandment and taken what was not his. What would his mother say? Alas! he knew too well, and dared not face the thought. It was a bitter warfare between Mind and Spirit, but Mind prevailed. He must hide his first transgression in the folds of a second. He must brazen it out, and tell a lie—and so he did!

The loss of the money was naturally soon noticed in

the household, and as he had been actually seen by the governess and others to buy sweets with a silver fourpence, circumstantial evidence pointed strongly in his direction. He was exhorted both by his father and mother to plead guilty, but no amount of persuasion or argument could induce him to confess. Not only did he strenuously deny the charge, but elaborated a plausible story in which the fourpenny-piece figured as the gift of a friend—a lady. Discovery, and not confession, closed the episode. By dint of investigation, the truth was at length unearthed, and its perversion duly visited on the offender, whose repentance when once awakened was overwhelming.

What could have prompted such barefaced simulation in a child usually so sensitively scrupulous and truthful, is a problem which even the Father himself can only solve, by attributing it to a very special intervention of his dark angel. The incident is even more inexplicable when considered from the standpoint of those who knew the little Leicester in the intimacy of his home-life, and can therefore affirm that by nature he was one of the most straightforward and conscientious atoms of creation ever put into a skin. Even the symbolical allusions frequently quoted by his father during the family prayer function were sources of scandal to his overwrought sensibility. He could not grasp the elastic interpretation of “cisterns that held no water,” still less the metaphorical figures of “wounds and bruises and putrefying sores” when applied to the probable condition of the assembled worshippers. The inaccuracy of the first statement he discovered by a secret and personal inspection of the domestic ball-cock, but on the second mystery he was fain to unbosom to a sympathetic sister. “I wonder *why* papa tells God such lies,” he said in a whisper. “If *we* said such things in the nursery, we should be punished; but I suppose at family prayers it is different. I’ve climbed up on the ledge and looked into the cistern, so I know that’s *full*; and as to bruises and sores—horrid, putrefying sores—why, we’ve none of us got even a scratch! I suppose it is all right, though,” he concluded

more cheerfully, "or papa wouldn't do it, especially at prayer-time"; and with this childish notion of Divine dispensation he strove to feel comforted, but he could not. Such a nervous horror and dread had he of anything even approaching prevarication, that he could not dwell upon the story of Ananias and Sapphira without downright physical pain. Whether in church or at home, the blood would unconsciously rush into his face if so much as the names of these typical liars were by any chance mentioned.

This unfortunate habit of blushing became a sore trial in the child's life. If at any time he happened to be court-martialed with others at the nursery inquisition into any small misdemeanour, his poor little pink cheeks would be certain to provoke suspicion, whether deserved or not. "Look how Lessie is blushing," became almost a byword in the domestic Star Chamber; but happily for him, his brothers and sisters loved him too dearly to allow any unjust blame to fall to his share.

Now and then, however, the imp of mischief would lead them to make sport of his extreme susceptibility, as the following little sidelight may somewhat serve to show.

By order—and as a precaution against risk of fire—the younger members of the Lyne family were strictly forbidden to set foot on the drawing-room hearthrug, and being obedient children, they never dreamed of encroaching beyond this borderland of limitation. But just to tease the timid little one, whose quaint old-world ways were beyond the ken of ordinary boydom, one of his brothers determined to have a bit of fun. Creeping up softly behind his victim, he landed him with a single push right into the very middle of the forbidden ground. "Now you are sure to go to hell, Leycester," he took care to say impressively. "You have broken the Fifth Commandment and disobeyed your father and your mother, so you *know* you will go there."

Neither parent happened to be present at the time, and to any ordinary child these foolish words would not have seemed more than a passing puff of smoke; but as it was, they entered like iron into his soul. The poor little fellow

was in an agony of apprehension, and there is no knowing to what lengths his terror might not have whirled him, had not his eldest sister taken compassion on his distress, and dispelled it with words of comfort and reason.

It is almost a psychological shibboleth—one of those many things that are not dreamt of in our philosophy—why and for what end the great complex chord of so religiously absorbed a personality should have been permitted even in its tender infancy to be haunted by so dire a nightmare as the fear of hell. Yet it is a pathetic fact, which the Monk himself is the first to refer to as one of the dominant influences of his young life. Nor did this thrall evaporate with the illusions of youth. For nearly thirty years it was his shadow, and an unceasing source of mental misery—all the more so because unconfided and borne alone.

So preoccupied was the child's mind with the imminent peril of his own soul and the souls of those around him, that he would labour strenuously amongst his brothers and sisters, often urging and exhorting them to go to church, and say their prayers devoutly, so “that they might be saved.” The afternoon services then held daily at Trinity Church, Marylebone Road, were occasions of special delight to him, and he was never happier than when, by dint of argument or coaxing, he could induce one or more of the juvenile home circle to attend them with him. Sometimes his entreaties would be accompanied with tears, at others he would, boy-like, offer them whole boxes of sweets, if they would only promise “to be good.” “For your souls' sake,” he never failed to reiterate, when the moment came for the passing of the lollypops into their small outstretched hands.

The most convincing proof that this gnawing dread of eternal punishment was an ever-present thorn in the soul it afflicted, may be found any day in the one and only answer with which the Abbot meets the familiar question, “Will you kindly tell me, Father Ignatius, what induced you to become a monk?” Here is the inevitable reply, given to friend or newsmonger alike: “I became a monk in the first

instance as a means of saving my soul from hell. This was *before* my conversion! *After* it, I remained a monk as an act of gratitude to the Lord Jesus for revealing Himself to me as my personal Saviour."

What the Reverend Father refers to as his "conversion," and how it came about, are details of intense spiritual interest, which in due course of continuity will reappear in these pages. At present they are only invoked to complete a group of nursery pictures, or rather, to bind the tiny bunch of evergreens gathered at random from the crowded garden of Memory.

Homely as these foregoing incidents may be, they are distinctly valuable. Not only do they embody a series of indelible impressions on a mind inspired to create and transmit impression as a direct means of grace, but what is far more reassuring, they illuminate the human side of a nature whose superb, unblushing humanity has snatched it back from that *impersonal* fanaticism which only too often fills our pulpits with monastic or secular petrifications. The Monk of Llanthony may be a fanatic—he is certainly not a Pharisee.

It is not from the pinnacle of the Temple, or while thanking God that he is not as other men are, that he pours his wine and oil into the wounds of the degenerate, but on the rough native heath of absolute hand-to-hand fellowship. Gladstone the Christian has already named Father Ignatius as the first among modern orators. He might have added, and the first spiritual socialist—the pioneer of that magnificent socialism which regards neither race, class, nor sect, but gathers them up one and all into its great heterogeneous charity, from the redskin "brave," listening open-mouthed in the Philadelphian Circus, to the poor London slavey, who, in the thick of her fight with brooms and soapsuds, still finds time to pen a little line: "Dear Father, I feel I must tell you that it is through *you* I have heard the Master's voice calling to me."

In the words of a popular Nonconformist preacher, not long since "passed over," "Give me a saint of flesh and

blood, not one of paint and plaster. Give me real, true holiness; not the whited sepulchre who affects to ignore the weak side of nature, but God's dear martyr who goes forth to fight and subdue it, and who helps others to do likewise.”

To the brutal historian much shall be forgiven, even the profane reflection that there will be a breathless moment in heaven when the recording angel and Ignatius of Jesus square up together the sum-total of their entries in the Golden Book of Souls.

CHAPTER IV

"A SPIRIT PASSED BEFORE MY FACE"

"Hush! Let a stillness deep
Brood over every heart!
Let every earthly thought
Now utterly depart."

IN spite of such heavy handicaps as delicate health and an acutely sensitive disposition, it was at the early figure of seven that Leycester Lyne made his first plunge into the rough-and-tumble sawdust of school-life. As far back as 1844 he had passed through the hands of the family governess, and was a boarder at the Manor House, Holloway, a preparatory establishment where the ages of the pupils varied from anything between seven and fourteen. This was the child's initial step into the outer world, and the two subsequent years passed at the Manor House seem to have been fairly uneventful, save for one extraordinary landmark—the first of the many supernatural visitations with which, later on, this strange life-story becomes so profusely spangled.

Although fragile and susceptible to a degree, our little hero, even at Holloway, was already more than a half-fledged personality. He was a whimsical combination of strength and weakness, grit and nerves; but somehow these contradictions must have been singularly winsome, for he was a thorough favourite all round. The religious fervour which from very infancy may truly be said to have coloured his whole life, had by this time deepened into a source of almost morbid preoccupation. The dread of hell and the saving of his soul were twin pivots on which his entire being revolved. What perplexed and grieved him more

than all, was to note the callous indifference with which these overwhelming reflections were treated by those around him. Neither at home nor elsewhere had he been able to find any spontaneous sympathy with his unchild-like imaginings, and the discovery of his spiritual isolation both shocked and puzzled him.

But apart from this one pathetic shadow, he was a bright, sunny-natured boy, impulsive and generous to a fault—a trifle stubborn when need be—and quite mischievous enough to defy the possibility of being biographed from the nauseous level of phenomenal goody-goodness. At his lessons he gave proof of an exceptional though somewhat unequal distribution of mental capacity, while in the playground he aired a goodly share of the quicksilver propensities that are inseparable from the typical healthy-minded man-child.

It was only in his "off" moments that the hand of the future seemed to lift him above his fellows. Unlike most children, Leycester Lyne was born pious. There must have been a strange predestination about his birth, for he was innately—and without suggestion or coercion—naturally prayerful and meditative. His Bible and his conscience were his absorbing influences, and the strain of living up to them a novitiate of supreme, because unexpressed suffering.

His piety was altogether of too peculiar and apprehensive a kind to be understood or appreciated, therefore it was in silence and alone that God's small servant crept out to strike the first timid note of the great trumpet-call that in course of time was to sound the spiritual war-cry throughout two mighty continents.

It would be interesting to reproduce the testimony of contemporary onlookers when touching these delicate phases of introspective analysis, but I have only space to quote a single pen—just one breath from the gentle sleeper who watched this prophetic childhood with the inspired insight vouchsafed only to motherhood. This is how Mrs. Lyne speaks of the little son whom, to the day of

her death, she was proud to call her "precious Monk": "I may with truth say that he has been engaged about his Divine Master's work ever since he could speak or walk." And again: "When he was a very little boy, he often used to say to me, 'I want to be a clergyman, but I do not want to have an *easy* life, like the *easy-going* clergymen. I should like to be more like a missionary.' Every year, or oftener, perhaps, I would ask him if he had changed his mind. His answer was always, 'No; I grow more anxious every day, and wish that the time was come for me to be working for our Blessed Lord.'" Then she adds lovingly, "He was never idle, but always converting his schoolfellows. His young life is a long history."

These single jottings are keynotes—faithful keynotes that ring true. They replace surmise with conviction, and turn the calcium full blaze on the one crucial fact—that the Monk of Llanthony is "a man sent from God," and not merely the inventor of a clumsy scheme for blasphemous self-advertisement.

Time, the great consummator, or upheaver of all things, had already been busy in the Holloway schoolhouse, and under his relentless scythe the morning vision of "the man in his nightgown" had quickened into a lifelong reality. The Divine Hand had touched one of His little ones, and from henceforward the tiny craft must weigh anchor and face the dark waters, which in years to come would *almost* but never quite overwhelm and sink it.

Into this period of the child's life there seems to have entered a distinctly supernormal element. Quite apart from his own individual piety, and the persistent efforts he made to missionise among his playmates, an event occurred which caused those around him to regard him more than ever as one of the "unaccountables" of creation. It is not given to many, and not always to those who are tottering over the last mile of the homeward-bound journey—the privilege of seeing and speaking with the dead. This little seven-year-old schoolboy was called upon to do both, and under the following circumstances.

Half a century ago or more, when the cult of hygiene and therapeutics had not reached its present high-water mark, the household dispositions of a school interior were very different from those of to-day. The sanitary, barrack-like dormitory was a thing unknown, and for the most part pupils were paired off to sleep in dimity-curtained double beds, three or four of which were stowed into each room.

At least, this was the fashion at the Holloway Manor, where the small person of "Master Lessie" was tucked away every night in a great four-posted erection together with another boy of his own age. Six other pupils shared three more similar beds in the same room. It is necessary to outline these details carefully for the sake of what is now to come.

One memorable evening (the hour must have been near eight o'clock, or earlier), the respective occupants of this particular room had just gone to bed, but not as yet to sleep. It was summer-time, and the daylight had scarcely begun to fade into the blue of gloaming. The place was very quiet; there were no pillow-fights, and every one felt disinclined even to be frisky or talkative. They all knew that in the room opposite, one of their comrades, a lad of fourteen, was lying ill—in the last stage of consumption—and this knowledge sobered them, though they had no notion that the sickness was unto death. All were in bed, and the hush of silence everywhere, when to their astonishment the door suddenly opened, and the boy in question entered. He walked quietly to the foot of the bed where the little Leycester lay. Up sat the latter. "Why, Friend," said he, "what *are* you doing here? Do go back to bed. You will catch cold, and be ever so much worse again." "Yes, you are not even dressed," chimed in the other youngster, popping up in *his* corner of the bed. But Friend only answered, "Tell me where is Mrs. —?" naming the wife of the headmaster. "Why, in her room, of course," was the rejoinder. Upon this, Friend moved over to a part of the room which terminated in a blank wall, and, to the amazement of those who watched him, they saw

that, instead of being clothed in ordinary day or night garments, he seemed swathed from head to foot in a curious sheet-like drapery. His face was bright and rosy, and there was altogether an air of health and vigour about him which they could not understand. When they had seen him last, he was pale and hollow-eyed, whereas now all trace of suffering seemed completely gone. "This was strange," they whispered together, "very strange indeed!" But in another instant a far greater shock awaited them. Without speaking or noticing them further, Friend walked deliberately up to the solid wall and disappeared through it, literally vanishing before their eyes.

The reaction was stupendous, and a breathless pause ensued. Not to one of those eight children did it occur that the familiar figure of their friend and companion could be anything but a natural incarnation of flesh and blood. The idea of an apparition—a ghost—was far from them. "Where is he?" "Where can he have gone to, through the wall?" were the comments that followed this extraordinary exit; but no one dreamt of feeling afraid, or even "creepy," so the ripple of unrest soon died out, and before long, Sleep, the angelic panacea for all childish ills and wonderments—Sleep intervened, and turned the lights low.

But with morning the busy tongues broke loose. The fantastic experience of the night was not to be forgotten, and they recounted it *en masse* to the authorities, with that easy confidence which truth lends to extreme youth when taking up the parable of the initiative. Foremost among the spokesmen was junior Lyne. It was he who had been actually addressed by the strange visitant, and as he was known to be a truthful and honourable boy, his testimony carried weight. "The Powers," however, thought fit to pooh-pooh the whole story as a dream or an invention. "You are naughty, untruthful children," was all Mrs. ——— said, when the deputation had unburdened itself into her private ear, and this imputation caused the heart of our future Abbot to blaze within him. "We are *not* naughty, or untruthful either," he replied hotly. "Friend spoke to me

himself, and we *all* saw him." Then Mrs. ——— had recourse to what she considered her trump card and quietus. "It is a downright lie," she exclaimed indignantly, "and I will give you the proof positive. Poor Friend died three days ago, and he is to be buried to-day."

This unlooked-for statement fell with a thud upon her young listeners; nevertheless, they stuck manfully to their guns. "All the same, we *did* see him," they repeated doggedly; and then they dispersed sorrowfully, each one with the chill of a great awe about his heart.

The rest is silence—the silence of the unanswerable. To this hour, the Reverend Father recalls the passing of this spirit before his face as one of the most vivid and significant of his many glimpses within the veil. In later life, other souls have appeared to him, both in the watches of the night and in broad daylight, but to what end these manifestations have been permitted, whether to solicit his prayers, or for any mightier purpose, the Monk still awaits revelation.

The above strange occurrence is about the only really monumental milestone in this early stage of my narration. At ten years old Leycester Lyne left the then green fields of rural Holloway, and returned to his father's house, to continue his education in a more advanced school in the neighbourhood. He was by this time beginning to give a decisive taste of his quality. Foremost among other promising aptitudes, he possessed a remarkable talent for oratory of all kinds—the "gift of the gab," as he himself irreverently calls it.

This endowment was not unnaturally a source of intense pride and pleasure to both his parents—the more so, that it was in their eyes a delightful "set off" to the more serious side of his character. There is at this moment in the Visitors' Refectory at Llanthony Monastery a certain quaint old sideboard, and this the Abbot has carefully pointed out to me as the public platform from which his maiden after-dinner speech and others were delivered.

To glance from the Monk himself, in his sober serge

and sandals, to this out-of-date relic, forming an incongruous contrast to the severe simplicity of its surroundings, makes it difficult to conjure up the picture of a luxurious dinner-table in a representative London home, with the central figure of a velvet-coated, bright-haired child—the latter treading the same long-suffering sideboard as though it had been the stage of Sadlers' Wells.

Yet the miniature is a signed original ! " I remember," says the Reverend Father, who hugely enjoys the humour of these memories, " that one evening I earned five shillings by a speech. I had rehearsed it carefully with my father, and he was so pleased that he tipped me on the spot. There was a large dinner-party that night, and I recollect my toast (to the ladies) wound up with the following climax, accompanied of course with my best bow: ' Ladies, my heart is beneath your feet. Treat it gently.' This simple speech was, however, destined to be a memorable one, for to the impression it produced the speaker may be said to have entirely owed a distinction shortly afterwards accorded him—nothing less than a Presentation Scholarship for St. Paul's School. The wife of one of the governors happened to be amongst the " ladies " toasted on this occasion, and so charmed was she with the young orator's powers of eloquence and gesture, that she at once begged her husband to present him with the next nomination that should occur—a privilege which was likewise extended to his elder brother.

The expressive, if " un-English wealth of gesture," which must ever have been the lesser light of this great preacher's eloquence, has already raised a flow of commentary, in which friend and foe alike have delighted to dabble. Modern criticism is such a circus-bred highstepper, that it has chosen to overlook the very obvious and double-barrelled cause (*national* plus *natural*) of an inevitable result.

In the first place, Father Ignatius inherits the wine of Southern blood in his veins. His own grandmother on the Lyne side—Angelica Arboin—was an Italian, a daughter of the Roman Ambassador at Lisbon ; so he hails direct

from the fatherland of expression *in excelsis*. Added to this, he is by nature, individual nature, a peculiarly sensitive and emotional man, and for the best of reasons—*God made him so!*

À propos of this magnetic hand-language, I cannot but recall the words of a famous actor, who at my request had come to hear the Monk during one of his last Missions. "Look at those hands!" he exclaimed, when we were barely midstream in the sermon. "Just look at the emotion in them! What would not some of us actors give to possess hands like those!" An outsider's parenthesis, but nevertheless the tribute of one who knows.

CHAPTER V

"HE LOVETH OUR NATION"

"In Hebrew, Greek, and Latin, see,
They've nailed His title to the Tree.
'Rex Judaeorum'—lo! this word
Describes the office of the Lord."

FROM this point and forward, the biographical wheel puts on an altogether brisker spurt. Our prologue has been duly spoken, and the curtain waits to ring up on the busy battle-scene—the one set piece in all this complicated life-drama.

It was the year 1847, and the eve of Leycester Lyne's introduction to the pleasures, miseries, and temptations of a public school. Like little Dombey of pathetic memory, the day had come for him "to be made a man of," and for the first time we note the direct influence of his father upon his life. Mr. Lyne senior was a man of somewhat peculiar temperament. His opinions were often biassed, and nearly always uncompromising; but by way of counterpoise, he possessed two immortal qualifications—a golden code of *principle*, and a courage to sustain it that was absolutely glorious. Here was no lath-and-plaster parent, or, to quote the Monk's own words, not one of those "damnable dummies" who are either too idle or too cowardly to break a guilty silence, and warn their sons decently but plainly of the special dangers waiting them in the moral hurly-burly of a crowded school.

"I owe my dear father," he continues, "a most affectionate debt of gratitude, if for this alone, that as a gentleman, a man, and a Christian, he sent us from him forewarned and forearmed to face the foe. It is my

earnest prayer that other fathers, reading these words, may be led to realise their tremendous responsibilities, and be plucky enough to go and do likewise."

It was at St. Paul's, then flourishing under the excellent rule of Dr. Kynaston, and amongst the branches of this popular tree of knowledge, that our Reverend Father first gained his supplementary name of "Saintly Lyne." Nearly four years were thus passed, and it is probable that several more might have succeeded them, had not a disastrous event occurred, which not only endangered his life for the time being, but was the cause of a distressing condition of nerve collapse, the effects of which he feels to this day.

This lamentable climax arose partly from the ignorant brutality of an undermaster (a clergyman), and in a lesser degree from the indomitable will-power of the boy himself. At the core, however, it was the culminating link in a heavy chain of influences, and one which was destined to throw a strange psychological glamour over the entire atmosphere of this devotional and emotional career.

For some time past—to the anxiety of his parents, and almost subconsciously to himself—a new and absorbing religious interest had been gaining possession of the lad's soul. Although neither by heredity nor association could he claim the remotest affinity with the Hebrew race, Leycester Lyne was an Israelite at heart—his Bible had made him one!

"God's Word *must* be true" is still the ultimatum of the Benedictine Monk, the colossal spear on which he impales all ecclesiastical or other Iscariots who betray the Book that they have kissed. It must have been something very near akin to this sublime simplicity that moved him even as a mere stripling to bow down before the outcast nation, as before the elect and chosen one of God.

This is what his Bible had taught him, and the Bible itself was a Jewish production, written *for* Jews, all about Jews, and *by* Jews (or, to be absolutely precise, by *Israelites*). These facts alone were significant enough, but their stupendous sequel was to follow. To whom does Chris-

tianity owe its supreme essence—the fulfilment of the Messianic promises? To the Jews! Jesus Christ was a Jew, Blessed Mary a Jewess; therefore to the throne of David only can revert the glory of the Word made Flesh.

Up to this point his fervour found sympathy, and in the home circle, at least, it met with no rebuff. But the childish element was bound to creep in somewhere, and very soon zeal had completely outstepped discretion. His enthusiasm gave place to something so like a mania, that his parents became uneasy, and his teachers seriously annoyed.

My Jewish readers may like to know that this love of their nation still warms the Monk's heart, though maturity has obviously chastened its mode of expression. Father Ignatius does not confine his oratory to Christian assemblies. He is a frequent and much-appreciated speaker in more than one of the great Hebrew Societies, and from time to time he has addressed many thousand sons and daughters of Zion on subjects touching their welfare, and especially on their return to the Land of Promise—a consummation for which he offers up daily prayer.

I have myself heard him deliver quite lately a magnificent impromptu to the Jews of Whitechapel, having for its burden the organisation of agricultural colonies in Palestine. It is a noteworthy statistic that as long ago as 1867 the Reverend Father predicted the mobilisation of this gigantic national enterprise—the re-peopling of the Holy Land with her own children—exactly thirty years before the movement was started which has since set the scheme afloat. This prophetic oration was delivered on the 8th of September, the birthday of the Great Jewess, the Mother of God, at St. Bartholomew's, Moor Lane, where, by consent and approval of the Incumbent and the Chief Rabbi, he addressed a crowded assembly (mostly Jewish) on this burning patriotic theme.

It is not astonishing that so deep and sincere an enthusiasm should in its earliest and cruder stages have presented a disagreeable side. At St. Paul's the surname of "Saintly

Lyne" was speedily submerged in another far less flattering, but it was not altogether without reason that they dubbed him "Jew-mad." So demonstrative was the respect he showed even to the humblest member of the sacred race, that every "old clo'" man whom he met (and they were many in those days) he would greet with bared head and a low bow. One day he accosted a small Jew boy—a stranger—and astonished him greatly by taking him under a lamp-post and asking him quite affectionately, "Don't you long and *pray* to go back to Jerusalem?" "How can I want to go back, when I've never been there?" was the matter-of-fact reply, and it fell like a douche on the anxious questioner, who fled, almost in tears.

At other times he would reiterate the same strange inquiry with an irrelevance that was almost startling. "Do you think the Jews *will* go back to Palestine?" became his invariable formula, and often without even waiting for an introduction. The careless or curt answers which this query frequently brought forth were sources of real pain to him.

In the end, even the patience of gentle Mrs. Lyne threatened to give way. "You are a perfect nuisance with your Jews, Lessie," said that sweet woman, as severely as she *could* say anything, "and I must forbid you to worry people any more about them."

But by the school authorities this persistent day-dream was looked upon in a far more dangerous light, and especially by one old Professor—a clerical pedagogue, in whose nostrils it is not uncharitable to surmise that the mere name of *Jew* must have sent forth an unsavoury odour. This worthy gentleman determined to cure his pupil of his fad by the radical treatment of the word and the blow—the blow first. As the last straw to the situation, the boy happened one day to bring with him into the classroom what he considered to be his greatest treasure, a series of Jewish pictures representing the Temple at Jerusalem, its high priests, and other similar subjects. The sight of these prints so infuriated the Squeers-like old

man, that he not only confiscated them, but condemned their owner to receive forty-two strokes of the cane upon the hands—two strokes for each picture, and there were twenty-one.

Young Lyne was by nature desperately sensitive, but he was also not a little stubborn, and possessed of that iron self-repression which pride lends even to the most frail when driven to bay. The punishment followed—an inhuman torture—which was borne without a sound or flinching; but the effect on him was appalling. When all the allotted strokes had been dealt save two or three, he fell unconscious, and in this deathlike condition was carried first to the master's house, and from thence in a cab home.

A long and dangerous illness followed, and for days his life was almost despaired of; nor did the tragedy end there. Even when, after many weeks, he began to rally, the doctors held out but slight hope of complete recovery. The whole nervous system was, so to speak, annihilated by the shock it had sustained, and the future depended on Nature's miracle-worker, youth. This gloomy forecast has been mercifully amended, but all who are acquainted with the Reverend Father know that even now he is subject to recurrences of the distressing nervous symptoms which at this time threatened altogether to destroy him. It is superfluous to add that in their anguish and indignation Mr. and Mrs. Lyne were not slow to demand of "the man at the wheel" the only reparation in his power. Despite the plea of advanced age, and forty years' services in St. Paul's School alone, the governors expelled the perpetrator of this act of barbarity—an exercise of authority which caused no little sensation at the time. Years later, when the persecution and fame of the Monk Ignatius were at their height, Dr. Kynaston, in a letter to Mrs. Lyne, paid his former pupil the following generous tribute:—

"My recollections of Joseph Leycester Lyne are among the freshest and most pleasing reminiscences of well-nigh the third of a century's superintendence of St. Paul's

School. You may say to all who ask—if any *should* ask such a question—'Had he the usual failings of a boy?' that in my judgment he was most unlike all boys that I ever knew, with none of their pardonable shortcomings, and more true holiness and spirituality of mind and character than usually falls to the lot of Christians."

This letter is dated the 27th of April 1871.

For my own part, I look upon the "St. Paul's tragedy" as one of the most regrettable episodes in this whole biography, the more so that it blurs what would otherwise have been an exuberant chapter in the Monk's life. Owing to his father's wise preventive counsels, these schooldays had been in many respects happy, and absolutely innocuous; still better, they supplied the background to several gorgeous touches of boylike effervescence.

Of these I subjoin but a single sample—"Just for the sake of any schoolboy," says the Reverend Father, "who may happen to turn over the leaves."

Fifty years ago it is probable that the classroom at St. Paul's presented a very different appearance from what it does to-day, in its revised Kensington edition. At any rate, in those good old times the great hall was subdivided into separate classes, mapped out, so to speak, into independent provinces, each two of which were governed by one master and a cane.

On a raised dais at one end of the room sat Dr. Kynaston, the autocratic Cæsar to whose august person no humble junior even in his wildest flights would have dreamed of addressing an appeal. At the side of this dais was a door through which the headmaster passed in and out of his private house—a prerogative reserved exclusively for himself.

One other geographical item, and an important one—the historical spot known as Scrip-Scrobs. This was a certain piece of neutral ground, a surplus space between two classes, where ungodly scholars were sent to study or meditate in retributive solitude, under the withering gaze of the public eye. There was one especially disagreeable side

to this moral pillory. Scrip-Scrobs was situated within easy range of *two* canes, and if by chance a miserable sinner sought to lighten his darkness by a sly grin, or any other telepathic communication with a sympathising comrade, he was pretty sure to test the "warming-up" properties of these combined wands, no matter how many copybooks he might have contrived to slip between sundry of his garments and his skin (a species of coat of mail much in vogue at St. Paul's).

Every one dreaded Scrip-Scrobs, and to the theologically disposed mind of "Saintly Lyne" it suggested the elements of Purgatory itself. Scrip-Scrobs was a place of purification, pain, and waiting; moreover, it was a transitory abode between the two worlds of pardon and punishment, so the synonym was complete.

One day, the boy who sat next him in class (a new-comer) whispered to him in melancholy confidence, "They have put my special chum in that dreadful place—what *can* I do to get him out?" The speaker was a greenhorn, therefore the temptation to draw him was a sore one. Our "Saint's" reply speaks for itself. "The only thing you can do," said that referee, with an assumption of authority which he never imagined would "go down,"—"the only thing you can do is to go now at once to Dr. Kynaston, and say to him, 'Please, sir, do deliver my friend from Purgatory.'"

In the same breath, and like an arrow from the bow, down the entire length of the busy classroom flew that verdant little boy—a spectacle which sent a thrill through the whole assembly, and caused his instigator's heart to take refuge in his boots. At that very moment, Dr. Kynaston happened to be in the act of going home to luncheon *via* his private door. His astonishment may be imagined, when, on reaching his own drawing-room, he found that he had been surreptitiously shadowed by a breathless urchin, who with tears in his eyes besought him to deliver his friend from Purgatory.

An instant later, the plenipotentiary made his re-

appearance in school, leading the youngster by the shoulder. "Call out Leycester Lyne," was all he said, but his voice sounded terrible in its conflict with suppressed laughter. "Is it true that you told this child to come and beg me to deliver his friend from Purgatory?" "Yes, sir," spoke up the accused, "I *did* do so, but only in fun." "And pray what do you mean by it?" was the next question. "Please, sir, Scrip-Scrobs is Purgatory, and So-and-So's chum is there." This was too much for Dr. Kynaston's powers of self-control. He burst out laughing—an example which was followed by every master present, and as many of the boys as were not too awestricken to rise to a suppressed guffaw.

And thus the affair ended, but its fruits were twofold. The suffering soul was delivered forthwith, and from that moment Scrip-Scrobs became traditionally associated with the names of Purgatory and Joseph Leycester Lyne.

Looking up other of my notes about this period, I find the following quaint entries: "During the interim between ten and fourteen years of age, Father Ignatius fought once, swore once, terrified with intention an un-offending lady and the domestic cook, and assaulted an old gentleman in the open street. He also composed some beautiful prayers about this time."

The show of fists referred to was a school-fight with a chum, whose nose the Light of Llanthony almost punched through his face, hugging him tenderly a moment later, when the flow of blood made him realise that he had "hurt his friend." The "cuss-word" must simply be indexed among other symptoms of a certain cold, which he vainly tried to magnify into a pretext for a day off from school. Failing in this attempt, and catching sight of the quizzical faces of his sisters, who watched his departure with childish relish, out popped the cork from his vial of wrath, and, for the first and last time in his life, he sought expansion in a good old swear.

The roof of the family residence, No. 6 Hunter Street (then undergoing repair), was the scene of the next esca-

pade. On the opposite side of the way lived an amiable lady, who was not unfrequently to be seen taking the air at her drawing-room window. At such moments, and for the sheer delight of excruciating this motherly soul to the verge of a fit or nervous paralysis, Leycester Lyne and his elder brother would secretly climb the workmen's ladder to their own roof, and by dint of realistic pantomime convey to their terrified *vis-à-vis* a suicidal intention of leaping over the low parapet into the street below. The more frantically the lady gesticulated, the more gleefully did her tormentors plunge and jump—but she was one too many for them! In the very zenith of their pranks, Mr. Lyne happened to return home from his office, an event which was noted alike by the miscreants up aloft and their agonised opposite neighbour. An instant later, the knocker sounded! A note was dropped into the letter-box at No. 6, and its result was such that the rod was not spared, neither were the children spoiled. The "cook" incident is self-suggestive, and only implies the casting into hysterics of a stout but timid female by the apparition in her kitchen of a sheet-clad and groan-emitting bogey.

But about the closing spree (the aggression on the old gentleman) there is such real unction, that it merits a monumental paragraph.

This time the scene was Newgate Street, the hour about 8.40 a.m., and "those concerned" were Leycester Lyne, his elder brother Frank, and one other boy-spirit more wicked than themselves. These three were wending their way together (as they frequently did) to St. Paul's School, and on the other side of the street strutted a well-dressed old gentleman, whose Pickwickian rotundity of person caused them no small delight. Unfortunately, the trio were just then discussing the delirious topic of pluck and daring, and as the conversation seemed likely to take a somewhat personal turn, a happy thought struck the eldest of the three. "I say, Leycester," said his brother, "you are always saying *you* would dare do *anything*! I dare you now to run after that old dandy and give him a good

tight spank." Such a challenge was too tempting to be resisted, and in the twinkling of an eye, to the horror of the two accomplices, that venerable and unoffending individual had received so good and tight a propeller, that it not only sent him into the middle of the week to come, but somewhere nearer to the blue moon than he had ever been before. The deed once done, its perpetrator was too much of a gentleman to slink round the corner. In an instant, his cap was in his hand. "I hope I did not hurt you *very* much, sir," he said respectfully; "but, you see, I was *dared* to do it, and so of course I had to." His victim's reply was almost as reminiscent of Dickens's immortal hero as were the outlines of his anatomy. "*You're* a queer cheeky little chap!" he gasped benevolently. "Here's a penny for you! Buy a bun." And the bun was bought.

Thus ends the flight of larks, the shower of sparkles—more's the pity; and to pick up the dropped stitches, we must grope for them in the lull of convalescence—the pervading stagnation of mind and body which clings to slow recovery from all illnesses that have drifted very near, without actually touching, the Opposite Shore.

As a documentary witness to the vital strength and depth of the impassioned Jewish fervour which cost this devoted child-student well-nigh the price of blood, I subjoin a characteristic extract from the cycle of daily prayers written by him when only thirteen. Here are a few sentences from the Morning Prayer:—

"O Lord God Jehovah! Worship of Israel! Look down upon me with Thine eyes of love; strengthen my understanding to believe Thy gracious promises. . . . Let Thy holy angels guard my path, Thy Holy Spirit my thoughts, words, and deeds, for the sake of Messiah, Jesus of Nazareth, King of the Jews. Amen."

CHAPTER VI

"THOU WILT REVIVE ME"

"There is a land where nothing fades,
Where blossoms ne'er decay;
There is a shore where all things live,
For endless summer's day."

"COMPLETE repose of mind and body for at least a year, and after that . . . *à la grâce de Dieu*. Not a book to be opened, or a run taken,"—in other words, absolute vegetation, mental and physical, or, as we should now word it, in fashionable parlance—a Rest Cure.

The many who are familiar with the relentless strain under which at least over forty years of the Reverend Father's life have been passed, and even the few who have made but casual note of his impassioned oratory, quick military step, and general atmosphere of irrepressible vitality, all these will realise with difficulty the application of this régime of compulsory inertia to the stormy petrel of the British Church. It needs more than a commonly elastic imagination to picture this superactive personality a limp, pale little convalescent, creeping slowly back to life on the combined crutches of a youthful constitution and the providence of a mother's love.

Yet even on this tenderly smoothed path the climb uphill was long and painful, and had it not been for his mother's patient and sustaining arm, it is doubtful whether it would ever have been accomplished. This gentle and resourceful woman was indeed a pillar of strength to her weak, weary son, and it was in a great measure owing to the sunshine of her presence that in course of time the

small ripples of returning life and vigour began to splash in feebly but surely over the pitiful dry sands.

During this tedious interim of enforced stagnation, Mrs. Lyne had taught her patient to turn his fingers to account. He had become an adept in many kinds of fancy-work, and in the fine arts of tatting and crochet an accomplished expert. Amongst other masterpieces, the Abbot of Llanthony claims sole design and workmanship of an elaborate antimacassar executed in crochet, and bearing for its centrepiece the facsimile of a steepled church.

Convalescent Corner once fairly turned, the clouds were not long in lifting, and in a relatively short time the doctors decided to turn their patient out to grass in the quiet green fields of some healthy country farm. The Hill House of Harrow Weald was the locale chosen for this experiment, and there, in this peaceful spot, and under the excellent care of the farmer, his wife and family, Leycester Lyné passed some of the most restful weeks in all his stormy life, and regained as much of his physical strength and nerve as he was ever again to possess. It was at Harrow Weald also, and about this time, that he made the acquaintance of the Rev. Edward Monro of Allegory fame, whose church he attended, and from whom he received much kind attention, and a never-to-be-forgotten stimulus to his advanced religious views. Mr. Monro's College happened to be (in those days) about the only schoolhouse where the dormitories were divided into separate cubicles, and as this system of semi-isolation suggested the magnetic imagery of the monastic cell, it was to the mind of our impressionable convalescent a distinct waft from the cloisters, and therefore unction to his soul. His illusions were somewhat nipped, however, when he discovered (from confidences made to him by those concerned) that his so-called "Monks" were in the habit of indulging in moonlight rambles with the fair ones of the Weald. But even then his enthusiasm died hard. He had inhaled the atmosphere of the sublime

Ascetic Law, its spirit was upon him, therefore the degenerate interpretation of its letter touched him only in the far-off secondary sense.

There was yet another and overwhelming delight in store for him—one that effectually relieved the monotony of his life among the daisies. A Jewish family came to lodge at the farm, mother, daughter, and son, the latter a boy about twelve years old, who rejoiced in the somewhat un-Israelitish name of Sydney. "*My* name is Joseph, a Jewish name," young Lyne took care to inform the new-comer, when the preliminaries of a red-hot friendship had been duly established between them. And many and pleasant were the walks and talks enjoyed by these two little lads during that sunny stretch of bright, boyish camaraderie. It was unfortunately fated to be of short duration, and for obvious reasons.

The aforesaid Joseph was a born Missioner, and even in those early days an uncompromising Sabbatarian—Friend Sydney was a Jew, and not a strict one either, so as an act of Christian charity his chum weighed him in the balance, and found him wanting. One word led to another, and the heart of the Missioner waxing hot within him, he was soon preaching Christianity for all he was worth. The effect on Sydney was powerful, and he wanted to know more. The boys were much thrown together, and Sydney's mother in her kindness of heart encouraged the intimacy. Being herself a susceptible soul, she sympathised with the somewhat lonely position of the interesting, fragile-looking child, and on every occasion that offered, she would invite him to share their walks, or any simple pleasures that might come their way. The consternation and indignation of this worthy lady may be imagined when, one peaceful Sunday, both boys being seated with her at the dinner-table, her son Sydney suddenly volunteered the following irrelevant piece of information: "Mother, do you know what I am going to be when I grow up? I am going to be a Christian, like Joseph."

These words were naturally rich in consequences, and not of the most pleasant kind. The Jewish mother was deeply offended at what she termed an undue and clandestine exercise of influence on the part of the zealous young Christian, while he himself was distressed beyond measure by her reproaches, and the sense of a divided duty towards God and his neighbour. "Is it true that you have spoken to Sydney about your religion?" was the question put to him; and his answer, though respectful, was fearlessly to the point: "Yes, of course it is true!" There was an awkward pause, after which the aggrieved lady briefly summed up the case. "I am afraid I cannot possibly allow you to walk or play with my son any more," she said gravely, "unless you give me your word of honour not to mention this subject between you." It was a trying moment for poor Joseph. "I cannot promise *now*," he said nervously, "but if you will let me go away by myself for a minute, I will come back and tell you what I can do." And at the end of the "minute" he reappeared. "Yes, I *may* promise," he said cheerfully; so the compact was sealed. The child had absented himself to pray, before giving his word, and he had evidently been enlightened.

It was a sore trial to live up to this promise; nevertheless, it was heroically kept. Only once did an evasion threaten, and even then it was on the side of Israel. One Sunday morning, just as Joseph was returning from church (*via* the Hill House garden), he was met by his friend Sydney, who showed him with great glee a heap of toys in the summer-house, which he had neatly stowed away and covered with a tarpaulin. "I have put my toys away to-day, Joseph," he whispered significantly, "*because it is Sunday*"; and Joseph smiled all over, in approbation, and gave his arm an expressive squeeze.

As an opportune break to this somewhat difficult situation, came a letter from Captain Leycester (our hero's uncle), asking his nephew to spend a few weeks on his ship, then stationed in Portsmouth Harbour—an invita-

tion which, at the desire of his parents, was forthwith accepted.

Life went merrily on board H.M.S. *Undaunted*, and the change from the peaceful but drowsy meadows of Harrow Weald to the bright, busy, board-ship existence in a crowded harbour, was the stimulus just needed to complete convalescence. The Leycester family consisted of the Captain himself, his wife, and two children—a boy and girl somewhat younger than their cousin-visitor. With his relations, as indeed with all on board, Leycester Lyne soon became a favourite and a puzzle; for whereas they one and all appreciated his natural amiability and bright humour, his earnest and simple piety made them thoroughly realise that the new-comer was no ordinary embodiment of representative rough-and-tumble boyhood. The young cousins were in especial delighted with their somewhat strange but fascinating companion. Time never hung heavily on their hands when he happened to be by, and it became quite a matter of wonderment to his uncle and aunt to see how thoroughly and almost subconsciously he took these two children under his wing, and became (in a few days after his arrival) their natural referee and resource on all matters connected with their amusements, occupations, and still graver or more personal concerns. As a reciter of wondrous legends and stories from the lives of Saints, his powers were inimitable, and his sense of the dramatic so acute, that at times his youthful listeners would be moved to tears by the vivid and pathetic realism of his impassioned word-pictures.

It must be admitted that the choice of subjects was morbid. Dr. Neale's "Stories of Christian Martyrs" was the fountain-head of these thrilling narratives, varied now and then by other excruciating pages from Church History. At times Captain Leycester himself was fain to interfere, and plead for more cheerful topics; but his children simply revelled in these blood-curdling lessons in martyrology, even though their hair stood erect while in process of instruction. They seemed to experience a species of per-

sonally reflected glory from their cousin's grip of realism, and they became—as children will—accordingly proud of him.

I want now to sound a moment's halt, and lead my reader to one of the greenest graves in the Monk's remembrances—the memory of the kind, motherly "Mamsie," whose devoted friendship he venerates amongst the few truly golden rifts in his long, tempestuous career.

The next-door neighbour of the *Undaunted* in Portsmouth Harbour was H.M.S. *Blanche*, commanded by Captain Reid, and it was Mrs. Reid, the wife of this well-known officer, who bore the honours of this expressive and affectionate title. The friendship of a really true and sympathetic woman can never fail to exercise a most elevating and refining influence on a boy's life, and the personality of Mrs. Reid seems to have embodied these rare qualifications in a marked degree. It was during his frequent visits to the *Blanche*, and the intimacy into which they naturally launched him with the Reid family, that the strange soul of Leycester Lyne met with well-nigh the first responsive echo to the spiritual isolation which he had sought so long and vainly to merge into some phase of human fellowship. His visits to the church services on shore under Mamsie's wing (and especially to those at Elson) were also memorable landmarks, inasmuch as they brought many a great bright drop to the deep sea of predestination which already had begun to roll in round his weak, childish feet. Mrs. Reid seems to have filled the post of auxiliary mother in the Reverend Father's life, and her ministry has lived out many years. It is only since the opening chapters of this book were completed that she was called Home. I can recall the day and hour when the news reached Llanthony, and how the Abbot left all things, to go into his church and commend to God the faithful soul that was even then crossing the Valley of the Shadow. His prayer was extempore, and simplicity itself—a child might have spoken it; but being an unbeliever in human gratitude,

it set me thinking. This was the climax: "Thou wilt not forget, dear Lord, her kindness to me when I was only a sickly boy; or her loyalty, sympathy, and devotion through all the sorrows and persecutions of my later years."

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Meanwhile, under the favourable auspices of ozone, and a healthy, regular life, our convalescent had well-nigh shuffled off his last coil, and though still but a mere whiff of a boy to look at, it became evident that it was time to consider his next move in the educational sense, before either the world or himself should be many months older. We next find him completing his cure at Brighton, in company with his mother and one or two of his brothers and sisters. Physically he had made incredible strides during the past few months, but mentally and spiritually his condition seemed unchanged, or, if anything, his religious zeal had become even more acute—a symptom which alarmed his mother, and gave his more matter-of-fact father a constant source of offence. "Soon ripe, soon rotten," was all the sympathy his son got from him, whenever he dared express even the thin end of what was called his "ridiculous" notions. Yet these notions grew and waxed strong within him, and this Brighton page of life is an important milestone, if only for the reason that it holds the cause and corner-stone of the Abbot of Llanthony's peculiar and personal devotion to the Feast of the Ascension.

Most of my readers are aware that this great Festival has always been observed by him as the Day of Days throughout the year, but all may not know that his motive is twofold—Adoration and Reparation, or, to use a homely parable, the leaf and flower of a tiny seed sown on the road to the Devil's Dyke.

One day, a particularly fine Thursday morning, Mrs. Lyne conceived the happy thought of driving with her children and a friend—a lady—to this favourite resort. The proposition of course brought down the house, and

in the twinkling of an eye a fly was procured, and the party set off merrily, little dreaming of the lifelong result that was to arise from that simple excursion. *En route*—it was in St. James's Street—Mrs. Lyne's friend happened to catch sight of an acquaintance, and out of courtesy the fly was stopped that she might speak to her. The halt was but momentary, but it sufficed for at least one of the occupants of the carriage to spy out a Prayer-Book in the stranger's hand. He instantly became all ears and eyes.

Amongst other casual remarks, the following occurred: "Why, where are you going with your Prayer-Book?" and the stranger, who happened to be a Roman Catholic, answered quite naturally, "To church, of course! Don't you know it is Ascension Day?"

With this, they said good-bye, and moved on; but there was a miserable little soul on its way to the Devil's Dyke. The shock had almost electrified him. His sun had faded in the sky, and as to his pleasure, he could scarcely speak for anguish. "Mother," he said at last desperately, "did you hear that? It is Ascension Day. Why are not we at church too?" And the pain of that unanswerable question went back with him to his comfortable home. He was full of horror and confusion, and that night his sleep was broken, his dreams hideous with the same remorse. All his old fear of hell rushed back upon him with redoubled force.

The midnight watches were always hours of reflective suffering to this strangely organised child. He would lie and ponder over the condition of his own soul and its chances of ultimate salvation, till he worked himself into a silent agony. There are few—too few, indeed—upon earth who can appreciate the cruel crucifixions of early life.

"I recollect on one occasion," says the Reverend Father, "and it was during that very time at Brighton, I dreamt an awful dream. I thought I was surrounded by crowds of terrible and wicked people, who seemed to combine to

drag me headlong into some black abyss. You may imagine how I felt when I awoke! In my terror, I groped for my Bible, and prayed with all my might and main that I might receive some grain of comfort from its inspired pages. I opened it at random, and on approaching the light I found that my finger unconsciously covered the fifth verse of the ninety-first Psalm, which contains the beautiful assurance, 'Thou shalt not be afraid of any terror by night,'—and I felt that my prayer was answered. A matter of coincidence, many will say, and they are welcome to their opinion. For my own part, I accepted the message then, as I accept it now, gratefully and humbly, and as a distinct instance of Divine interposition. This merciful privilege has been vouchsafed to me again and again, through the long and stormy years of my life's battle."

Father Ignatius has told me, that ever since that night at Brighton he has always had an open Bible by his bedside during the hours of sleep and darkness.

CHAPTER VII

"AND I HEARD A VOICE"

"Shall I ever, then, repent me
Vows, dear Lord, I've made to Thee?
No! ah no! for Thou hast taught me
Evermore to cling to Thee."

WERE this the biography of an ordinary secular, instead of an extraordinary ecclesiastic, I should head the page recording the year 1852 somewhat on these lines. Leycester Lyne had now entered on his fifteenth year, and his word-portrait may be summed up in a few easy strokes. The outer boy, a light and bright creation, lithe of limb and straight and strong of speech; the inner, a handful of tangled wires, nerves, fibre, and that pervading something, one part humorous and three parts pathetic, which has never yet been carried to the font. In short, an incarnation, and a typical one, of the not unmixed blessing (or affliction) that for want of a name we label "the artistic temperament."

It is impossible, even when elaborating the folds of the monkish garb, to step over these absolutely personal outlines. The lad of 1852 and the Abbot-Missioner of 1903 are one and the same piece of God's handicraft, with only this difference, that the gaze of the child-enthusiast turns naturally eastward towards the primrose-pink of mysterious dawn, while the eyes of the Solitary, who has fought single-handed against World, Church, and Devil—these weary, far-seeing eyes are fixed upon the afterglow of an accomplished dream, the crown of half a century's Gethsemane of ceaseless prayer and sacrifice. The subject of the picture is identical, only the pose has altered, and the background

merged from misty grey into the gold and crimson touches of the westward sky.

It is useful to emphasise these introspective shadows, and necessary to do so, in order to give prominence to the powerful motive which alone could have induced a young, sympathetic nature—one to whom the Beautiful in sight and sound was exquisitely precious—to strip off the purple of this world and carry the self-imposed burden of a rough and heavy cross. To most of us the very name of poverty is horrible, the idea of silence and seclusion repellent. Yet it was these very paths that this delicately-nurtured, frail-bodied lad was secretly mapping out for his own future pilgrimage, not grudgingly or of necessity, but by voluntary and indomitable free-will.

At the age of fifteen the Monk of Llanthony was in many ways a representative English boy, but he was also strong in personal idiosyncrasy. His talents all leaned towards the artistic side, the scientific balance weighing apparently but lightly. By nature he was possessed of remarkable powers of imagination, oratory, and dramatic realism. Of music he was passionately fond, also of the theatre, and the latter he would visit as often as three times a week, until the approach of his Confirmation pulled him up with a jerk, and revealed to him that he was about to shift to his own shoulders the solemn yoke of renunciation—one of the supreme acts of the Christian's life.

Meanwhile the hands of the clock were going round, and the question of education began to press. Owing to the past disastrous experiences and his own delicate health, the possibility of another public school was beyond discussion, and the alternative of private tuition became necessary. But here an obstacle arose.

The year 1852 seems somehow to have been marked by a financial crisis in the Lyne family, though of the precise nature of this contingency the Reverend Father can conjure but a faint recall. All he remembers is that, in consequence of the special interest taken in him by his father's wealthy cousin, Mr. Stephen Lyne Stephens, he

found himself placed under the care of the Rev. George Newnham Wright, an excellent clergyman, who at Ayscough Fee Hall, Spalding, headed a well-known establishment, where a select few were received to complete their education, either on special or general lines. Four whole years of the Monk's life were passed under the roof of this worthy tutor (who subsequently removed with his flock of pupils to Worcester), and he only left him at nineteen years of age, when the critical moment in his career had arrived, and he became a student at one of the theological colleges.

At Spalding, as at St. Paul's, and even as far back as Holloway, young Lyne possessed a peculiar influence over the hearts and minds of his fellow-pupils. He simply held them one and all in the hollow of his hand ; yet he was by no means despotic or self-assertive. They came to him of their own accord, because they trusted him, and felt the indirect refreshment of a spirituality which they could not understand. And so, though one of the youngest and most delicate amongst them, he became their infallible referee and potentate. Difficulties moral and temporal, love affairs, and all sorts and conditions of youthful confidences, were poured into his patient ears, and his advice was considered oracular—all except in one direction, and that was in the matter of fists. If a fight between two boys was imminent, the word went quickly round, "Don't tell Lyne, or he'll rush in and spoil it." Yet somehow he not unfrequently managed to intervene when black eyes and bleeding noses were becoming acute, and the mere sight of him produced a lull.

The parish church of Spalding holds a very special place among these boyish souvenirs. It was in this time-worn, be-pewed and galleried house of God that our Abbot made the second Communion of his life ; here, also, that while a mere child he received the personal revelation and heard the Voice which whispered to him the stupendous but simple secret of the Eucharistic Presence. This was the first breath of those many supernatural utterances and

impulses which from time to time have so unexpectedly illuminated and comforted his soul.

If there was one thing which Leycester Lyne loved in this world, it was music. He was a born musician, both in the perceptive and executive senses, therefore the choir practices in Spalding Church were sources of keen interest to him, and he seldom failed to attend them. It was on one of these occasions that, in order to listen and yet be out of the way, he sat himself quietly on the altar-step, his back being turned to the Holy Table. No sooner was he thus installed than an overwhelming sense of the Mystic crept in about his heart. The choir and the organ seemed borne into the far-away, and he became aware of another Presence—that of a Voice, a soft, persistent Voice, at whose sound he rose and stood aghast. “Why do you turn your back,” it whispered gently, “upon My altar—poor miserable table though it be—the altar where I Myself am so often *present* in the sacrament of My Body and Blood?”

Then the peal of the organ, the children’s chanting, floated in again, and only the impression remained—a red-lettered inspiration which no human hand shall ever efface. From that moment the boy, and later on the man, has gone forth to preach the doctrine of the greatest of all miracles with the confidence of one having authority, and not as the mere scribe whose office is to stereotype the echoes of remote, impersonal hypothesis.

“How can I do otherwise,” he says simply, “than believe in the Real Presence in the sacramental elements, when my Master Himself has revealed It to me?”

And his faith in this revelation has never faltered—the faith of the little child, the faith of the great man. A lily in the hand of the one, a battle-axe in the grasp of the other, and the Light of lights to both.

We now come to a strangely psychological period of the Monk’s life—his Confirmation—a twisted web of joys and bitter agonies. To the boy’s peculiar and highly-strung mind the attributes of this important crisis were clear as day. Confirmation he knew to be, apart from its

own significance, the outer gate to the Divine feast for which his soul yearned; but there was also a darkness upon him—a darkness that could be felt. He did not yet know Jesus as his personal Saviour; he could not then interpret the “*Consummatum est*” of a complete atonement, and he saw only the clouds around the Judgment Seat, not the loving Hand stretched forth to beckon the weak and weary to come unto Him and be at rest.

His way was to be through the cold valley of misunderstanding and loneliness. Nevertheless, he plunged into it boldly. There were no reservations on his side—no sacrifices, however fiery, that were half-hearted. The spur of his soul's salvation was pricking him night and day, and he almost hailed the laying on of the Episcopal hands as a means of grace to this great end, a forlorn hope of attaining the glory of which he could only catch a far-off glimpse, and that through a glass darkly. The conception of a face-to-face and individual communion with the Good Shepherd had not yet come to him, and it was while in this condition of acute misery and desolation of soul that he was summoned home to be prepared for these sacramental rites by the Hon. and Rev. Montagu Villiers, Rector of St. George's, Bloomsbury, the clergyman specially selected by his parents for that purpose.

This well-intentioned ecclesiastic, who was himself a saintly man, seems inadvertently to have added to the boy's burden rather than to have lifted it. Judging solely from the zeal and earnestness of his candidate, he took for granted that he held no doubts as to the certainty of his salvation, and under this false impression the beautiful alphabet of religion was literally propounded backwards. All the consolation and power of the grand old A B C were overlooked in the stress laid on the concluding letters. “We love Him because He first loved us”—the Christian corner-stone—was ignored altogether, and in its place this supplementary question asked, “Do *you* love Jesus Christ enough to renounce the pomps and vanities of this wicked world?” But of the great responsive note of Divine love, Divine

invitation, not so much as a breath! And in the chill of this unfortunate omission the morbid soul of the postulant crept back still farther within itself.

The memory of this "preparation," and the anguish it caused him, still preoccupies the Reverend Father to no small degree. He fears lest the clergy of all denominations should be apt to lapse into the pitfall of his own well-intentioned instructor, and lose sight of the one thing needful—the doctrine of Divine Love—in their zeal to perfect their pupils in the more technical details of religious structure. "How I shall thank God," he says, "if even one amongst these many dear good men will realise his mistake from reading these pages!"

In the home circle, unfortunately, the spiritual relations were even more strained. The Lyne family, as I have before stated, was a thoroughly Christian household, according to the conventional code of piety of fifty years ago; but as this high-water mark happened to differ radically from the ideal standard already adopted by the youthful ascetic, the consequences could not be productive of harmony. "Leycester's advanced views" had long since become a current topic in the domestic circle, and his father had already declared in his wrath that he cursed the day when he had put a Prayer-Book into his son's hands. But the boy was not to be "downed" by parental prejudice or coercion. He had chapter and verse of argument at his finger-tips, and he upheld no doctrine which was not authorised either by Holy Writ or some National Council of the Established English Church. All the same, his opinions were denounced as Popish and superstitious, and Mr. Lyne used every means in his power to pulverise them into dust. The Monk's subsequent career best expresses the futility of these endeavours; but the suffering they caused him at the time was intense. Not even his gentle mother could minister to his grief. A prophetic glimmer—the spark of an undefined reverence for what she could not fathom—may even then have been struggling in her heart, but it was for the most part an outcome of her own

sweet nature, and the tenderness she felt for a dearly-loved child. The light which is the Light of the World was to come later, and in the meanwhile she could only watch and wait.

The year 1854 was a memorable one in this life-story. It embodied three strides in spiritual progress—Confirmation, First Communion, and the inward registration of those solemn vows which have since transformed a brilliant citizen into a man of sorrows—a self-made Ishmael.

His Confirmation alone is a notable datum. There was courage as well as fanaticism in the way this fragile little lad took upon his own shoulders the wearing of the baptismal yoke. The child was in very deed the father of the man, and his renunciations were real and literal. In a breath, he had effaced himself for ever. No more pomps and vanities; no more theatres, parties, or boyish pleasures. He had given his word to God, and he must keep it.

It was in a state of tremulous unrest that he approached the sacred ceremony, every nerve vibrating, and the sense of his own shortcomings weighing heavily on his soul. Not even the impressive touch of the Bishop's hands seemed to bring him peace. To use his own words: "I look back to my Confirmation as one of the most sorrowful days of my life. As a last straw to my distress, I remember how, on reaching home the same afternoon, my dear mother in the kindness of her heart offered to buy me a present—whatever I liked—to commemorate the event. 'Oh no, no! Pray don't!' were the only words I could utter; and then I rushed up to my own room, locked the door, and threw myself face downward on the floor, weeping bitterly. How long I lay there I know not, but it was the bell of St. Pancras Church ringing for Evensong that roused me, and somehow I felt that God was speaking to me through that bell. It seemed to say 'Come! come! come!' and I knew that comfort was not far off. I got up and stole out quietly to church, quite convinced that I was about to receive some special message; nor was I wrong. I simply followed the service, and waited. 'I waited for the Lord,

and He inclined unto me.' The light was long in coming, but it reached me at last, and through a simple sentence in our beautiful and familiar prayer of thanksgiving—'By giving up ourselves to Thy service.' That was all; but I knew it was my message by the witness of God's Spirit within my soul, and in the same moment I gave for ever to my Master the one thing He required of me—*my life!*"

The Abbot of Llanthony's despotic Catholicism as regards the enforcing of fasting Communion in his monastic church is no secret, and this fact alone should call forth a public pang of sympathy when I chronicle that his own first Communion had to be made at midday, and under fire of a thousand well-meant Protestantisms with which his father thought it his duty to improve the occasion. Even the sight of his son's pious preoccupation proved a source of irritation to this over-zealous personality. His speech alone, on the walk home from church, was curiously characteristic. "You need not put on that long face, Leycester. We do not want any of your new-fangled notions. You have been to the Lord's Supper—a purely commemorative act—and that is all about it."

A short time later, our hero rejoined his tutor at Ayscough Fee Hall, and afterwards shared his exodus to Britannia House, Worcester, in which quaint old city a very striking page of life was to be turned down.

It is interesting to note that when next the Reverend Father visited Spalding it was after a lapse of over twenty years, and on the occasion of a crowded and much-blessed Mission which he held amongst his old friends. The impression of the congregation must have been worth recording when they saw step into their parish pulpit, not the familiar figure of the bright boy-student they knew so well, but the black-robed, sandal-shod, and shaven-crowned apparition of "Ignatius of Jesus," the celebrated Benedictine Monk.

CHAPTER VIII

"ONE WHOM HIS MOTHER COMFORTETH"

"Then I shall see my mother dear,
Who loved me here below,
And taught me while she tarried here
All things I ought to know."

THE years spent at Britannia House seem to have been productive of many harvests. Amongst other first-fruits, they brought forth a gradual and very tender intimacy of soul between mother and son. As if by pre-ordained coincidence, the same tide which set a gulf of spiritual estrangement between Mr. Lyne senior and his much-misunderstood child, in the case of the gentle wife-mother produced a contrary effect. She rose slowly but surely to the heroism of mediation, and, as a peacemaker, learned at last to follow herself in the light track of the feet whose first baby-steps her own hands had guided with so much loving care.

It would be a delightful turning aside to devote a whole chapter's tribute to our Abbot's dear and beautiful mother,—the one unfailing sympathiser and comforter, to whom he never once looked in vain,—but the lack of space forbids me even to approach her save in direct reference to her son's career. That she overshadowed his life to a remarkable degree is a fact of which he never fails to remind me, and it is from this reverent if secondary standpoint that I lay white flowers at her shrine.

The atmosphere of a Cathedral town, the very sound of the bells, and the assembly of officiating clergy, must have been wafts from Paradise to a nature predisposed for absorption; and there can be little doubt but that these

associations, added to an irrevocable personal resolve, served to furnish the last straws to a vocation already more than semi-developed.

It is not extraordinary either that the presence and out-of-date piety of this youthful anachronism should have tickled the curiosity of the local Eye, and what is still more important, that his unusual qualifications should have diffused a wide, almost illimitable propaganda. This is what the Rev. George Newnham Wright, his tutor, has to say on the subject, after an intimate, everyday experience of nearly five years:—

“I do not hesitate to say,” he writes in a letter to Mrs. Lyne, “that in his relations to his schoolfellows and to myself his life was exemplary. His dormitory was his domestic chapel. The Cathedral of our city witnessed his pious and uniform attention to that duty which was suggested by Scripture—to remember his Creator in the days of his youth; and in every act of his life he seemed supported and directed by the Spirit of Truth. He left me accompanied by the prayers of his youthful friends, who felt themselves unable to follow his laudable example. Since then, his life, which is before his country, has been consistent in keeping God always before him.”

In the wake of so radical and comprehensive a testimony, detail grows pale; but I should like to add that the Worcester period includes the forming of many sincere and lifelong friendships, also that it was rich in edification as well as soul-ache. The radiance was atmospheric—outward surroundings and inward progress towards the goal of a high calling; but the suffering he endured was bitter, the more so that it arose from the opposition and displeasure of a father whom he implicitly obeyed. Many lads in his position would have doubled, and taken the fences at a flying leap; but Leycester Lyne was built another way. To circumvent authority never entered his head. He simply squared up to it unflinchingly, carried his burden to Calvary, and abided by the result.

At last, even the consolation of week-day services was

denied him, and his father limited his Communion to once in two months—a restriction which he accepted with infinite pain. Nevertheless, the expansion of his vocation crept on apace, and it had derived a new and precious stimulus in his mother's sympathy. At her suggestion, he confided his troubles to her old friend and connection, the Bishop of Moray and Ross, writing him a letter of some length on the subject so near his heart. The boy was much comforted when, in reply, Dr. Eden assured him that "in the sight of God he was not called upon to yield religious conviction to unreasonable parental prejudice."

He also formed some noteworthy friendships about this period, especially those of Dean Peel (a brother of the famous Sir Robert of the same name), and the Loscombes, of grateful memory. This family was chiefly represented by a cluster of maiden ladies, one of whom, a short time later, rushed nobly to the rescue when want of funds, owing to his father's obduracy, threatened altogether to swamp out the possibility of a religious career.

Foremost also amongst the Worcester influences must be counted that of the Rev. Mr. Wilding, Rector of St. Helen's and St. Alban's. It was in this church that the Monk of Llanthony made his clerical début, reading the lessons occasionally at Matins and Evensong; and here also, under the guidance of the same kindly priest, that he made his first Sacramental Confession. Thus altogether, though the Worcester period may be counted amongst the few negative undercurrents of this stormy cataract of events, yet it certainly gave oil to the wheel of Destiny, and set it turning once and for ever into a great energising force of perpetual motion, perpetual struggle, perpetual sacrifice.

When nearing the age of nineteen, and knowing that his term with Mr. Wright was drawing to a close, Leicester Lyne most dutifully but firmly set before his father his determination to serve God in His Church. To his mother he had long since unfolded his hopes and fears on the subject, and she, on her side, had confided the situation to

the good Bishop, her kinsman. But to Mr. Lyne himself, although he knew his son's decision to be a foregone conclusion, the news came with the shock of an exploding shell. He refused either to see or speak with the unlucky offender, and declared he would not give a penny-piece towards the College expenses, which he knew would be considerable. "Leycester shall not go into the Church," he repeated angrily, when, woman-like, his gentle wife sought to turn his wrath from her favourite child. "He shall not be a clergyman! With his ridiculous High Church ideas, he is only fit to serve in a shop!"

And no amount of argument or persuasion could induce him to shift his ground. If his son persisted in disobeying him, he could take the consequences, and that was all. But Mrs. Lyne's appeal to the Scotch Primate had not been altogether in vain. Dr. Eden remembered his remarkable correspondence with the strange, enthusiastic stripling, whose piety and simple earnestness had impressed him not a little, and he determined to do all in his power to assist and further what he believed to be an unusually edifying vocation. Writing in this strain to Mrs. Lyne, he promised to facilitate her son's entrance into Glenalmond College, provided that the necessary means were forthcoming to defray expenses. This was the most cruel crisis of all, for it threatened to be an utterly hopeless one. Nevertheless, a guardian angel in the shape of a devoted friend intervened, and swept the cobwebs into shadows.

This amiable administrator was none other than Miss Louisa Loscombe, one of the benevolent and charming spinsters to whom reference has already been directed in this chapter. This pious lady, who had also made red-lettered note of the devout dispositions of her interesting young friend, and who pitied from her heart the agonising straits in which his father's opposition had placed him—she forthwith put on her wishing-cap, and, having the wherewithal at her command, promptly dispensed it.

First steps are always crucial, therefore it is no exaggeration to surmise that to the generosity of this loyal

adherent, Llanthony is in a material measure indebted for its Founder, and the unconverted world for its greatest and most indefatigable of Missioners.

Without money in this mundane sphere, nothing that is human can live—no scheme, however sublime, be set on foot. It is needless, therefore, to suggest the ecstatic gratitude and surprise with which this good fortune was received. Mrs. Lyne shared her son's feelings to the full, and perhaps she even surpassed them, for no one but a mother, and that a very tender one, can know what it is to see a beloved child suddenly lifted into the upper air of a heart's desire realised and fulfilled.

Trinity College, Glenalmond, is still one of the leading theological centres in Scotland, but as this volume purports to be a biography, and not a guide-book, I shall abjure local descriptiveness. By way of counterpoise, however, I wish to add to the statistical fact that most of the nineteenth, twentieth, and twenty-first years of our hero's life were passed in this semi-ecclesiastical establishment, the comment, that he entered it with the intent to become a priest rather than a monk. The monastic embers may have been already smouldering in his spirit, but they were still without form, and to a certain extent void of definite purpose. He was very young, very delicate, and on the threshold of a new existence; moreover, the mere mention of monasticism conjured up the dust and sackcloth of departed times. The attraction of the life of solitude and contemplation had nevertheless been magnetic to him from early childhood, but it had grown with him more as a vague and mystic dream than within the prospect of possibility. It will be seen on a later page how small a breath, how light a side wind, sufficed to fan these embers into living flame—the flame of a pillar of fire that should rise up before the world.

Glenalmond Seminary in the years 1856–59 was personally superintended by two distinguished clerical lights—the Rev. Dr. Hannah, its Warden, and the Rev. William Bright, afterwards Regius Professor of Ecclesiastical History

at Christ Church, Oxford. It was under the guidance of these learned gentlemen that our Divinity student plunged for his *Bene Decessit*, and gained it with a degree of distinction both brilliant and deserved, although he himself rebels against this statement, and persists in affirming that, except in one or two special subjects, he was phenomenally obtuse, or, to use his own unflattering metaphor, "a perfect ass!"

With an almighty twinkle does the Reverend Father recount his hopeless encounters with Aristotle, and the ancient philosophers of Greece and Rome, in those memorable College days. "Ethics and Mathematics were certainly not my forte," he confesses comically enough, "and try as I would, I could never make head or tail of them. I have some of my notes on Aristotle still carefully preserved in my cell, and I am sure I don't know what they mean even now. Theology was always a delightful and easy study to me, and I had no trouble in learning my Bible and Prayer-Book backwards; but, oh dear! those problems and metaphysical monkey-puzzles, they were too much for me altogether. Not that I did not admire from afar off the magnificent ingenuity of their construction. I could not persuade them to squeeze into the circle of my brain radius, that is all."

Placing in a disinterested balance the Monk's personal strictures, together with outside contemporary evidence, it is perhaps only logical to deduce a divided result. The testimony of St. Paul's and Spalding lean in a similar direction. His talents were strong and definite, but so concentrated as not to be general. Their centres were special, therefore they absorbed the energising sap. This is the case in all real vocations—they are the soul's monopoly or nothing.

To the Professors of Trinity, this peculiar phase of development was a sealed book. They could not unearth the cause of their pupil's exceptional brilliancy on the one hand, and his contradictory lack of perception on the other. Dr. Hannah in particular took the matter seriously to

heart. He was an experienced and patient teacher—one who possessed the rare gift of transmitting clearly and briefly the knowledge he himself had mastered. But even with this expert pioneer the fields of science proved dark and barren. Dr. Hannah had a peculiar way of expressing despair, and that was by seizing and caressing furiously the two shaggy eyebrows of which Nature had made him a present. "Don't you see what I mean, Mr. Lyne?" he would repeat constantly, when pointing the solution to some problematic masterpiece in the presence of the whole class. "No, sir," would be the invariable answer; "I am very sorry, but I can't see it at all." Then the tugging at the hairy holocausts would recommence vigorously, and with a shrug of the shoulders the elucidation was either postponed to next time, or abandoned altogether as a bad job!

It is satisfactory to note that this somewhat trying inequality of mental calibre did not by any means diminish the sincere respect and admiration which both Professors felt for their peculiar young student. Dr. Bright's good word is a specially generous one—the more so, that it was penned gratuitously, at a time when, years later, the "notorious Father Ignatius" was successfully knocking the wag out of the tail of Protestantism. "If I am desired to say," writes the Professor, "what I thought of Joseph Leycester Lyne's moral and religious character while he was my pupil at Trinity College, I cannot hesitate to answer that it was conspicuous for simple piety and single-minded earnestness." Nor is the Warden's eulogy far behind that of his colleague. He also speaks warmly of his former pupil as "a person of good moral character, much religious correctness, attractive manners, and commendable attention to his studies." The later portion of this volume will explain the utility—I may almost say the necessity—for running a consecutive thread of contemporary opinion through the expanding phases of the Monk's life.

His own description of the years spent at Glenalmond is simple and reflective, and in the latter sense it points

to two distinct flaws in the preparation of those about to postulate as ministers of God. He deplores the emphasis laid on the technical side of the instructions, to the detriment of the spiritual, and the danger thereby incurred—that of losing grip of personal religion, in order to seize the tangled meshes of elaborate and dogmatical theology.

CHAPTER IX

"THEN SAID I, LO, I COME!"

"Let me come closer to Thee, Jesus,
Oh, closer day by day;
Let me lean harder on Thee, Jesus,
Yes, harder all the way."

WHEN the great bell of the monastic vocation sounded its solemn Angelus in the soul of Leycester Lyne, he was engaged in the very perfunctory act of crossing the Quad of Glenalmond Seminary in company with sundry of his fellow-students. It was the hour of Evensong, and they were all *en route* for the Collegiate chapel. Somehow, by the way, a touch of hyperbolical illusion crossed one of the number. "I say," he exclaimed suddenly, turning to his comrades, "we look just like ye monks of ye nineteenth century processing to ye Vespers."

Light words, lightly spoken, and more lightly yet received; but they were the finding of the lost chord, the missing *mot de l'énigme* vouchsafed to at least *one* amongst that schoolboy throng of listeners. The allusion, which to the others fell as the chaff before the wind, came upon him as good seed comes upon the fallow furrows, and it took root and flourished accordingly. That short, commonplace little walk was the first step into the cloisters of the Monk's life. It gave realism to his dreams, absolute foothold in the current where he had often found himself eddying and drifting to no defined end.

But his secret was too precious for expression even to his mother, and his own intelligence taught him the utter madness of breathing so much as a monkish whisper in the ear of his country's Church. The impossible rose up before

him and blotted out the sun ; but he merely looked it in the face, weighed it, measured it, and did what all great achievers—Napoleon included—have done before him, he *waited*. Mrs. Lyne's own words on the subject form a valuable marginal. "He then felt," she wrote to a friend, "that he had found the very thing he wanted, and he made up his mind to give his whole life and soul to God by becoming a monk ; but he did not mention his feelings to me till after he was ordained, when he became a curate at Plymouth."

As time went on at Glenalmond, and the crisis of the theological course became imminent, the old enemy—delicate health—came once more to the fore. The late study hours, and the pressure of the final heat for the impending exam., were sources of terrible trial to the sensitive organism of a naturally weakly and highly nervous youth ; but by way of compensation the wires of endurance were in perpetual tension, and the future Monk was cast in the mould that suffers but surmounts ; so he pulled through.

On one occasion, however, it was almost a case of hands up. He was working in his room for all he was worth, and the night being chill and lonely, there is little doubt but that this combination of causes brought on what followed—an alarming collapse of nerve and brain. He suddenly became blind and incapable of moving hand or foot. By a supreme effort, he managed to hurl a boot at the wall before lapsing into complete unconsciousness, and this noise mercifully attracted the attention of his next-door neighbour, who rushed in to the rescue, and after a long time managed to "bring him to," and land him, more dead than alive, in bed. This attack was followed by such complete prostration that young Lyne believed himself to be actually dying. In his morbid and overwrought anxiety for his soul's welfare, he sent an urgent message to Dr. Hannah, begging to be allowed to receive Holy Communion the very next morning—a consolation which the Warden declined to accord him, taking a more cheery view of his case, and not thinking

it prudent to encourage what he deemed to be his pupil's "extreme tendencies."

This inopportune illness seems to have been the first of the many painful nerve-storms which from time to time have threatened to overwhelm the Reverend Father whenever his very limited stock of physical strength has received any special taxation. They are the legacy, the doctors tell him, of the unfortunate incident which I have before referred to as the "St. Paul's tragedy" in these earlier pages, and which I again mention in order to remind my readers that besides the outside sword-thrusts of persecution and misrepresentation, the Monk of Llanthony has had to bear the still more trying pin-pricks of an inward and personal thorn in the flesh. What the wearing of the cross of weakness must have meant to this active, energetic spirit, only a few can guess who have borne a similar load. There is no more pathetic note in the whole human symphony than the double harnessing of conflicting elements. In the case in point, this inspired orator and relentless self-sacrificer has been forced to tolerate the incongruous *alter ego* of a fragile and emotional physique.

But, happily, the blessed set-off of rapid recuperation is amongst the Reverend Father's reserve forces, and at Glenalmond this quality stood him in good stead. He carried off his Bene Decessit with flying colours, though at the cost of untold nervous suffering. "I have never had a student who knew his Bible so well," was Dr. Bright's spontaneous comment when referring, years later, to his personal experience of the already much-discussed ascetic.

It would be delightful to be able to supplement the grind at Trinity College with a pastorage of repose—a home picture of congratulations, and a lull before the next roll of the cruel tide; but the lines of truth must needs be followed, though they lead into the wilderness. The scene is a desolate one enough—a lamentable upheaval in the domestic circle, and the practical expulsion of our principal actor into the wide world without a penny in his pockets, and only the moral compensation (a precious but unprolific

one so far as this life is concerned) of a mother's agonised solicitude and the sympathy of one or two loyal friends.

By order of Canon Law, candidates for the Diaconate in England cannot present themselves for ordination till they have completed their twenty-third year—a useful precaution instituted for the purpose of submitting unhatched vocations to the incubating processes of time and postulancy. When Leycester Lyne left Glenalmond he was barely twenty-one, and a gap of two mortal years had therefore to be accounted for in the material sense, plus the clerically preparatory one. This was the situation, or as much of it as concerns these pages. Mr. Lyne senior, unabashed or softened by his son's success at College, refused to let him come home even to talk matters over, would neither see nor write to him, and literally cast him adrift at the mercy of the four winds. Mrs. Lyne, who suffered still more than her child at this unreasonable conduct on her husband's part, was practically powerless to amend the breach. Altogether, it was a climax which to realise must almost have been felt. It is a strange but powerful insight into the contradictory side of human nature—what followed on the part of this angry and self-opinionated man, when his son's ordination was accomplished in spite of him, and he accepted its consequences as the leading light by which he himself, together with his whole family, should henceforth walk. There is something truly beautiful about the way in which "the father" within him rose to the occasion, and stood in voluntary bareheadedness to share the volley from Church and State which was so soon to be poured like a hail of fire upon the name of Joseph Leycester Lyne.

Whether in the open court, in the columns of the daily press, or standing unarmed and alone to face the blasphemies of a howling mob, this striking and almost soldierly presence was seldom absent from the wake of the pale, transparent-looking young Monk.

It is only deeply to be lamented that so sublime an idyll as that of the strong-bodied old man being led onward and upward by the shadowy hand of his own child, could

not have been crowned by a more epic close; but the hand of Fate is inexorable. Ten years before Mr. Lyne's own death, and for no graver incentive than the Abbot's intervention in a perfectly impersonal family matter, his father constituted himself his most implacable enemy, and with consequences so disastrous and deadly, that they very nearly brought their victim in sorrow to his grave. These details will be submitted to a stronger lens as the wheel rolls on; but even in these few pen-strokes I must not overlook the consoling fact that Mr. Lyne did not die in antagonism to his Monk-son. The Angel of Sleep brought peace in his wings, and the scales were lifted from the poor unseeing eyes. On his deathbed itself the old man of eighty-eight craved and obtained the loving blessing of the child whom he had so cruelly and unjustifiably wronged.

I have anticipated somewhat, but not without reason. It is necessary for the reader to understand the moral environments of the twenty-one-year-old student when he stepped out from the Theological College, and faced—a blank wall. But the sky is mostly darkest near to dawn, and his good friend the kindly Bishop once more found a solution to the difficulty. The Law Canonical made no restrictions as to the age of officiating Catechists, though it brought its thumb to bear on the subject of Deacons and the numbering of their summers. "Therefore," argued Dr. Eden, in pursuance of this logic, "although Leycester Lyne cannot be an ordained Clergyman for the next two years, there is nothing to prevent his becoming a Catechist. Let him come up to Inverness, and I will give him work in my own diocese." So to Inverness he went.

And this brings us to the first real strokes from the shoulder—the earliest manifestations of independent speech and action in the man who has since held a forty-years' championship for a species of independence which has been cursed by many, blessed by still more, and imitated by none.

It was at Inverness, and while lodging at peaceful Blink-bonnie with his friends the Andersons, that the gleam of this

free-lance first caught the public eye. Quite apart from his official appearance in the parish school and Mission chapel, the arrival of the delicate and gentlemanly-looking young stranger was a social event. He was a novelty, and a charming addition to the select circle of the local set; moreover, the inevitable "little bird" having whispered that the new-comer was one of the rich Lynes, all the hunting mammas for miles round put on their "pink" and mustered for a run.

My readers may be interested to learn that the Reverend Father has confided to me the only personal romance of his life. It was short and sweet, and occurred at the age of six, when he gave his heart to a particularly big girl of twelve—a certain Miss Clarkson—whom he worshipped at a distance for the space of a week, and then callously forgot evermore. But if "Mr. Lyne," as he then began to be called, found favour with the ladies and Society magnates of the Inverness population, the High Church principles which he fearlessly preached and practised caused more than a premonitory shock to the susceptibility of the "orthodox" contingency. They could not but notice the magnetic personal sway which the young Catechist was gaining both in school and Mission, and his extraordinary powers of conversion and the winning-over of souls. Yet he taught nothing, preached nothing, that their national books of reference—the Bible and Prayer-Book—did not fully authorise; so it was difficult for them to formulate an open attack, and they were forced to nurse their sentiments in silence, till an opportunity for an explosion should occur.

The professed but timid Catholicism of the Scottish Episcopal Church forty years back cannot be a revelation to many who may turn these leaves. Every reader of average education will easily picture the startling effect of such uncompromising doctrines as those of the Eucharistic Presence and the Veneration of God's Virgin Mother, when disseminated broadcast in chapel and schoolroom by a youth of twenty-one.

In especial, this bold and unexpected stand found disfavour in the eyes of the parochial schoolmistress, a fiery



JOSEPH LEYCESTER LYNE
AT THE AGE OF 21



spinster of mature years, who set herself the task of listening to her Girls' Bible Class instruction by the Bishop's Catechist in the amiable spirit of a cat who quivers in ambush over the gambols of a predestinated mouse. Mr. Lyne, albeit, happened to be perfectly aware of his enemy's tactics, and being young, and perhaps also a wee bit mischievous, he delighted in pouring snap-dragon instead of oil upon the troubled waters. The culminating blow was dealt at the Feast of the Annunciation—the Annunciation of *Our Lady*, as the Catechist took special care to impress upon his class. This propaganda was almost productive of spiritual apoplexy in the soul of the Protestant amazon, and she forthwith presented herself before the astonished Bishop with the cheering tidings that his friend Mr. Lyne was "teaching Popish abominations" in her school.

Dr. Eden's only reply was the just one. He sent for the accused, and asked him on what authority he could possibly teach a set of Protestant girls to call the Virgin Mary by her Roman Catholic title, *Our Lady*. "On no other authority than that of your own English Prayer-Book, my lord," was the ready answer; and turning quickly to the Table of Special Lessons for Feasts and Holy Days, he pointed to the printed sentence, "*Annunciation of Our Lady*," large as life.

His lordship could scarcely deny the evidence of such palpable chapter and verse as the page of the National Book of Prayers, so he took refuge in mild expostulation, suggested the expediency of modifications and the necessity for pursuing a temporising policy. Now, the bare notion of anything with even the whiff of a half-measure about it must ever have been noxious to the neck-or-nothing spirit which has made Llanthony a cynosure in Christendom; and when that notion actually compromised one of his most dearly-cherished sources of devotion, it is not difficult to realise how he writhed under the Bishop's well-meant neutrality. He returned to his post more than ever determined to be up and about his Father's business, without yielding one iota of the ground which he believed to be

sacred, and therefore beyond the human touch of surrender or worldly-wise subterfuge. I do not think that even the Monk's most bitter enemies have ever accused him of docking the ears and tails of his uncompromising principles. I remember the amusing comment of a certain (since defunct) weekly on this score—a rag that was torn between conflicting feelings of admiration and wrath at the “inconvenient” rules of life set down by the great preacher for the dwellers in the world. Says this large-minded organ: “Father Ignatius is very rude, but right. There are many who can abuse him roundly, but where are the others who can refute him after all?”

Dr. Eden's life during the sojourn of his dear young friend in his diocese cannot have been an unmixed blessing. Complaints, expostulations, and endless questions poured in on all sides—a species of “No Popery” riot in a teacup, which in the end caused the floating of the white feather from the Episcopal citadel. Tabitha of the Schoolroom rejoiced openly; the horn of the Kirkites was exalted for joy. The news spread like wildfire—the Bishop had given Mr. Lyne his *congé*; but it is not fiction to add that this decisive step caused the pacific Primate no small official compunction, as well as a great deal of personal sorrow. His zealous Catechist's labours had been fruitful in the town. Amongst his school pupils he was adored openly, and in his house-to-house visitations his ministry had been equally powerful. It is true that his raids on Presbyterianism were fiery and untiring; but even in these his uncompromising boldness and the sincerity of his advocacy gained him much heartfelt admiration and many souls. “He was much grieved,” says an eye-witness, writing of this period, “at giving up his work; but it was the Bishop's will, so he had to go.”

Mr. Lyne's last appearance at the Mission chapel was a memorable sight. Young as he was, he already possessed the gift of drawing all men unto him. The chapel was full with his Bible Class, and many other grateful souls, who had come to take a final look at the friend they loved so well

—the preacher and practiser of a Christianity which had brought the light of conversion to so many darkened spirits. Tears flowed on every side, and as he left the chapel an ovation of sobs and outstretched hands awaited him. "Good-bye, sir ; God bless you !" was the chorus which followed him from the chapel to his lodgings. And thus, under the shower of his friends' regrets and blessings, he passed out of their sight, to live always in their remembrance—the only earthly garden where the immortelles are all the year in bloom.

CHAPTER X

“FEED MY SHEEP”

“Give grace to all Thy Bishops, Lord!
Oh give them power Divine
To lay their hands on pious men,
To serve Thee at Thy Shrine!”

BY remarkable coincidence, or more likely by Divine overshadowing, the bitter whirlwinds of sorrow and persecution which have scarcely ceased to attend the progress of the Monk's career, have never been permitted to sweep him to destruction. Soon or late—sometimes at the last gasp—an emergency-angel has been forthcoming to temper the blast and shut the lion's mouth.

Mrs. Cameron—the “Granny” whom he still memorises with such grateful veneration—was the representative of these ministering celestials, when she made a summary swoop upon the unlucky Inverness incident, and carried off the young Catechist to her own luxurious home.

It was not from the standpoint of the designing mother that this act of kidnapping was committed. Mr. Lyne's stay in Inverness had brought him into constant and close intercourse with the Cameron family, and the kindly “Granny” had conceived a very strong and disinterested affection for the somewhat strangely situated youth, who, needless to say, both appreciated and returned the sentiment. With her children also (a son and daughter) he was already on the footing of a brother, and once, during a rare lull in his officiate at school and chapel, they had persuaded him to pay them a flying visit at their beautiful and typical Highland estate—Lakefield, Glen Urquhart. It is more than likely that spiritual sympathy had much

to say in the knitting of these friendly ties, but be this as it may, it was in the guise of a devoted and motherly soul that Mrs. Cameron came forward to solve a financial problem which threatened to become as involved and urgent as that of Glenalmond College itself. The difficulties, in fact, were identical—want of means, want of advancement, only with this difference, the Bishop's Catechist was a licensed preacher, and could therefore seek a field of labour if he chose. Dr. Eden, although he elected to withdraw his personal countenance from the zealous young Missioner, had no plea on which to deprive him of his licence. It was therefore without scruple on the score of delicacy that Mr. Lyne accepted Mrs. Cameron's offer of a year's hospitality; for her property was a large one, including a church on the estate, and he knew that he could most usefully exercise his ministry while enjoying the society of his friends.

Glen Urquhart Church was set in the very heart of a mountaineering district, and it could only boast of a congregation once in the year—the shooting season. During the off months it remained traditionally empty, all the residents of the poorer classes being members of the Free Kirk. Such an unpromising forecast would have made most High Churchmen think twice before attempting to scale so slippery a precipice of prejudice and opposition; but as to our hero, his teeth were simply aching to crack the nut. No sooner was he installed than he plunged straight into midstream. There were no ambiguous beginnings, no thin ends of the Tractarian wedge insinuated. The Glen Urquhart Catechist started where he intended also to finish, and it must be admitted that he kept things going with a vengeance.

In the twinkling of an eye, he floated a Sunday school, church choir, and week-day services, also a practical system of cottage visitation—the last no easy matter in a scattered Highland parish. At first he was regarded almost as a madman, and by the Presbyterians as an Anti-Christ; but gradually and surely the church began to fill, first on

Sundays, and then on week-days; and soon the influence of the strange solemn services became the magnet of many miles round. Amongst the poor in especial, the suffering and the sorrowful, Mr. Lyne very soon obtained a firm footing. His extreme youth, delicate looks, and simple earnestness won even the cynical and irreligious to his side—in fact, he was beloved by all save a few rabid Presbyterians, and these compensated the balance by hating him with the hatred which impotency alone can give. They felt his power and feared their own weakness, so they followed the sordid course, and sought to bully what they could not crush.

The Free Kirk ministers naturally headed the eruptions. They positively dared their flocks to attend the Popish idolatries and ceremonies of the Lakefield Church, and on finding this edict of no avail, the pastors knocked their heads together and held a Session on the degenerates. Deacons of the Presbyterian faith were sent forth secretly to spy upon those who strayed within "the disguised Jesuit's" jurisdiction; but as, unfortunately, these amateur detectives possessed neither the training nor ability of Scotland Yard experts, their machinations were both clumsy and ludicrous. The situation they created savoured of the third-rate melodrama. No sooner did the Vesper bell begin to ring, than from behind trees and bushes, long faces and sandy whiskers might be seen protruding, after the manner of stage villains in a blood-and-thunder tragedy. The name of every unlucky Free Kirkite who dared to show his nose within the Lakefield territory was duly noted in tablets supplied for that purpose, and afterwards submitted for public anathema at the improvised tribunal of the local Inquisition.

If our Reverend Father had not repeatedly beaten the record of the familiar nine-lived god of the Egyptians, I might say it was a miracle that he emerged with a whole skin from his eighteen-months' campaign against the elders of a "persuasion" professing to be both Christian and *Free*. In the aftermath of events, when some

years later “Brother Ignatius” included his old Highland haunts in the itinerary of a prolonged preaching tour, it would have been a journalistic feat to have interviewed a few survivors of this reign of terror on the fiery topic of the Benedictine cowl. Yet another item of local colour. On this very Mission circuit over the Border, the Monk was accompanied (amongst other helpers) by Mrs. Cameron herself—the faithful “Granny” who had seen him through so many tight places during the stirring times of his clerical apprenticeship to his lordship the Bishop of Moray and Ross.

But it was neither as a fanatical firebrand nor a seditious meddler that Mr. Lyne strove to break up and burn the barriers which rose between Glen Urquhart and the Narrow Way. His aims and methods were then what they are to-day, simple and straightforward, their ideal identical—sheep for the Master’s Fold—jewels for His Crown—souls for His Sacred Heart. Unfortunately, however, our Catechist was an anachronism of the positive pole. He either belonged to a school of asceticism long since forgotten, or he was the prototype of an unborn era in the developments of the life religious—and this spiritual riddle both Church and world were too idly comfortable to do more than strive to suppress.

No sooner did Dr. Eden realise that the murmur at Glen Urquhart meant war, and that most of the old-fashioned Episcopalians had gone over to the Free Kirk side, than he ended the matter (scarcely wisely or justly) with a stroke of the pen. Leycester Lyne’s licence was withdrawn, and Lakefield Church closed till further order. The Bishop’s action, added to the blighting frost it cast upon his work, brought real sorrow to this bright, brave soul. Overwrought and physically weary as he was, the result was a severe illness, inflammation of the heart and other alarming symptoms keeping him at a low ebb for many winter weeks. He was finally taken into Inverness, and from thence to Nairn; but he continued so ill, that as a last resource his mother was sent for, and, reviving

somewhat under the influence of her tender care and sympathy, he accompanied her by easy stages to London and to the family home—a sign that even as far back as the year 1859 his father's animosity must have already been on the wane.

Notwithstanding its abrupt and stormy conclusion, the Lakefield episode is amongst the Abbot's most pleasant reminiscences, and of its more trivial side he recalls one or two comic touches. The first is the relentless persistency with which local gossips married him to every single or widowed lady in the neighbourhood. On one occasion he was confidently announced to be engaged to seven simultaneously, and this was a species of mischievous pursuit which died very hard. It did not occur to his friends and congregation that a young and good-looking man—who could sing Jacobite songs till his audience swam in tears—might dream of a higher vocation than that of a "good marriage." When he finally left them, a celibate and in company with his mother, the perforation of feelings was considerable.

Another quaint note, though really a serious one, sounds the recollection of the Evening Bath which he instituted in the Camerons' establishment on the Eve of the Ascension. Extra bodily cleanliness was to his zealous mind the necessary accompaniment of the spritual preparation inseparable from so great a Vigil. It was an act of devotion—the offering up of a spotless temple—which could not but be acceptable to God. So, having prefaced his exhortation by example, he commended the soapsuds to his flock. Most of them were docile—amongst them the dear gentle "Granny," who went to her ablutions like a lamb. Her daughter followed suit, the Lakefield servants also; but when it came to the son of the house, he grew restive. "I have had one bath already to-day," he protested querulously. "Isn't that enough?" "Never mind; Leycester wishes it," was Mrs. Cameron's rejoinder; and after that there was not much more to be said, for "Leycester" held the keys of infallibility in the Cameron household, and rather than hurt his

feelings they would one and all have cheerfully enterprised a journey to the moon. So the rebel had to tub it like the rest. And it is only the hand of Death which has ever loosened the intimacy of those loyal Highland friends, some of whom are still waiting to go Home.

I may now chronicle an interim—a brief lapse of rest—one of the few that the Monk has ever known. He was fast approaching the age limit of the Diaconate, and being still resolved to present himself for Holy Orders, he set about the necessary preliminaries. Meanwhile he was convalescing slowly in his parents' house, and looking forward eagerly and with intense anxiety to the next step forward—his ordination. The Christmas of 1860 was the date fixed for the ceremony, which was to be preceded by the usual examination—an ordeal of three or four days' duration. This examination took place at Exeter, the arbitrators being Canon Woolcombe and Chancellor Harrington; and we have Mrs. Lyne's authority for stating that of all the questions in the given "papers," her son with a single exception answered every one. The Reverend Father tells me that his ordination exam. was purely technical—"terribly technical," he adds, with a sigh. "I had one or two 'talks' with the fellow-student who shared my rooms, but beyond that, the spiritual side was left untouched."

His ordination took place on the 23rd of December 1860, when "by letters dismissory from the Bishop of Exeter, Joseph Leycester Lyne was ordained Deacon in Wells Cathedral by Lord Auckland, on two conditions: (1) That not being a graduate of a University, he should remain Deacon for three years, and (2) That he should not preach in the diocese of Exeter till he had received Priest's Orders."

Ordination Sunday must have been a glorious Sabbath in the Monk's life, and yet a painful one as well. To the prescribed vows of the solemn office, he added the voluntary ones of an overwhelming renunciation of all that is dearest to the heart of man, and the consecration of his entire being to a service which he knew would mean Calvary as well as

Pentecost. And even through the very exhilaration of the sense of sacrifice crept the heavy chill of the old agony, the old horror, the fear of hell which compassed him about even in the midst of his holiest thoughts and actions—at the moment, too, when he stood upon the threshold of a new life as the acknowledged minister of God, the dispenser of His sacraments.

And now again to the lower level, a step backwards to the material links in the chain! Mr. Lyne had no sooner reached the age limit of the Diaconate than it became necessary to seek a curacy; and the financial stumbling-block had somehow to be met. The strings of the home-purse were still drawn against him, and the want of means seemed to handicap him on every side. At this juncture the Rev. Canon Prynne stepped in with the offer of a gratuitous curacy at his own church, St. Peter's, Plymouth; but the absence of stipend rendered acceptance impossible, and the clouds seemed as though they would never lift. Then two unexpected events cleared the sky. Mr. Stephen Lyne Stephens, the rich cousin who had already defrayed the expenses at Ayscough Fee Hall, died, and left his relative, the would-be Deacon, a small legacy (some £160). At almost the same moment, his faithful friend Miss Cameron came forward with a gift of jewellery valued at £300, and which was actually sold for £160—a dead loss, it is true, but the stress of the moment was urgent, and there was no time to negotiate a better sale.

Thus, with a capital of £300 in hand, the possibility of accepting an unpaid charge became less remote, and Mr. Lyne determined to revoke his Plymouth negative, and place himself (if only *pro tem.*) under the banner of his kind old friend Canon Prynne.

Most women—especially mothers—will understand how deep a sigh of relief must have gone up from Mrs. Lyne's heart, when at length, and in spite of such fearful odds, she felt her favourite child to be fairly launched upon the life of his election—a member of the Apostolic Mission—one of the many feeders of God's sheep. Yet her crown was essentially

the mother's, half roses, half thorns! Nevertheless, in the shadow of the Immaculate Emblem of Womanhood made perfect, she wore it uncomplainingly and as an act of infinite thanksgiving.

Mr. Lyne's experiences as a Curate at Plymouth are inclusive of two important biographical landmarks—*i.e.* the manifestation of "the supernatural" in his own person, and the formation of lifelong friendships with two central figures in modern Church History.

CHAPTER XI

"HE CASTETH OUT DEVILS"

"Oh, help us, Lord, to work the works
Of holiness and love;
To prove we seek not things below,
But holy things above."

WHEN the train which numbered amongst its passengers the Rev. J. Leycester Lyne, Curate-Designate of St. Peter's, steamed into Plymouth Station, it was unconscious of its responsibility in ushering into the British Church the regenerator of its mouldy and time-trodden monasticism. As the Reverend Father stepped on to the platform at the old Devonian seaport, he may also be said to have entered the cradle of his Monk's career. Plymouth was destined to be a mystic page in his life's history—a marble pillar in the Colosseum of ecclesiastical phenomena.

There was already the warm waft of incense in the atmosphere of the town, and this was doubtless in a measure due to the vicinity and influence of a very famous woman—the religious enthusiast who owned the distinction of writing herself the first enclosed nun in the Anglican Communion since the reformatory reign of the bluff King-Murderer. Miss Sellon, or the "Lady Abbess," as she is historically called, was a personality scarcely less remarkable than her lifelong friend and coadjutor—the Father of Tractarianism—Dr. Pusey himself, that saintly spiritual warrior under whose light and governance she accomplished so great a work for Church and womanhood. It is no exaggeration to state that these two distinguished souls were the ghostly foster-parents of the Monk's vocation, or at any rate of its consummation. "My Mother Superior"

is the affectionate and respectful name by which he still designates the noted Abbess; “my father in God,” the tribute he accords the other exalted guide of his youth, the unfailing friend and counsellor of his later years. Treasured up in the Llanthony archives are very precious relics of both these celebrated representatives, in the shape of voluminous and interesting correspondences. Some portion of these—Dr. Pusey’s letters in especial—I shall have occasion to refer to in a later chapter, but for the most part they are of too intimate a nature to warrant wholesale reproduction.

Well-nigh up to the very year of his death, Dr. Pusey was the chosen administrator of the Sacrament of Penance to the Monk, his friend, his confidant in all things, his arbitrator in all situations difficult or intense. I take a special pleasure in reiterating this fact, if only as a wholesome corrective to the wilful reticence with which contemporary pens have seen fit to pass it by. Dr. Pusey made no secret of his sympathy with the much-persecuted Benedictine, and upheld both himself and his work at all times and in all places, even taking the trouble to give emphatic denial to a report once current, that he had spoken in disapproval of his friend. It would therefore be instructive as well as amusing to “spot” the cause of this expressive silence. To the uninitiated, the suggestion of motive is twofold—either the amiable desire to deprive a defenceless head of the bolster-up of a weight-carrying connection, or else a simple ebullition of that hatred, malice, and all uncharitableness from which even public writers are supposed to pray to be delivered, in their Litany. As another proof of the very cordial relations existing between these three representative types—the matured Theologian, the cloistered Nun, and the fiery young Missioner—I must not omit to say that Miss Caroline Sellon (sister to the Lady Abbess) presented our Reverend Father with his first stole—the work of her own clever fingers—and that it was from the hands of Dr. Pusey that he received his first habit.

The period of Mr. Lyne’s ministry in Plymouth covers

little more than a year, but those twelve months were monuments of action and much blessing. The parish of St. Peter's was a large and crowded one, and a spirit pervaded it, especially amongst the lower classes, which cried loudly for conversion. Canon Prynne speaks in no grudging terms of his young Curate's capabilities for handling such a task. The following are a few gleanings from a whole page of eulogy occurring in a correspondence with Mrs. Lyne some thirty years ago. "He was animated," says the Canon, "with a very true spirit of devotion and zeal in carrying out such work as was assigned him; and his earnest and loving character largely won the affections of those amongst whom he ministered."

For the first few weeks, at least, Mr. Lyne found his hands full enough, and his flock anything but inclined to show him sympathy or encouragement. Almost any other man would have retreated crestfallen and dejected into the shell of his official limitations, fulfilling his obligations and nothing more; but the Curate of St. Peter's was of an altogether tougher build—one of those inexplicable fabrics into which the Creator had woven the uncrushable woof and warp, of which "He alone knoweth the secret"; therefore the very brambles in his path were incentives instead of hindrances, the murmur of opposition an echo of the soldier's reveillé.

As at Inverness, and also at Lakefield, it was the Dissenting contingent which rose in arms against the house-to-house ministrations of their zealous visitor; but he likewise suffered many things from "his own," who received him not. The total outsiders and degenerate "Nothingites," who were by rights of birth and early training children of the Established Church, and yet wilful aliens by the rejection of her sacraments and Divine authority—these were perhaps the sharpest and sorest thorns against which he had to press. But the Lord was with His young servant, and on more occasions than one His power was manifested in a way which brought a thunderbolt of conviction even to the most stubborn of belief.

Owing to the exigencies of space, I can only reproduce two of the most striking instances.

Mr. Lyne's chief parochial work lay in a large degree amongst the sick poor—a charge which naturally brought him into close contact with all sorts and conditions of human sorrow and degradation, as well as many an unexpected oasis of Christian resignation and fortitude. Amongst other spiritual miseries, this special ministration took him headlong into the centre of the unbaptized. The presence of His Majesty Death is an open-sesame to many secrets which nothing in this world can bring to light, and it was while awaiting and striving to soften or sanctify the fall of the Great Shadow that God's sentinel took note and number of the many sheep who still wandered in outer darkness and self-imposed exile from the One and Only Fold. The barriers, however, were hard even to handle, almost desperate to loosen, practically impossible to uproot. Tepid indifference was the nearest approach to religious fervour which Mr. Lyne met with at the outset in certain portions of his parish Mission walks; and in these quarters a popular spirit of preconceived detestation of both Church and clergy seemed to hold the local pulse. One street in especial caused him many a prayer and sigh. It consisted of a stuffy but pseudo-respectable row of small houses, two of which were occupied in next-door proximity by families rejoicing in the quaint names of Egg and Hatch. One of these families (it matters not which) was a large one, but not all Mr. Lyne's powers of persuasion and eloquence could induce its presiding spirit—a virago of a mother—to have her children baptized. These children were numerous, and averaged from a girl of fourteen downwards. In the early days, Mrs. Egg or Hatch received the Curate's exhortations with superb sarcasm, later on she treated him to a taste of her Sunday-best vocabulary; but the day came when his plain speaking was bound to produce a climax—whereupon she ordered him off the premises altogether. “We don't want you or yer religion neither,” was her parting benediction, “so just clear out!”

And seeing the case was for the moment hopeless, clear out he did, but not till he had obeyed the Biblical injunction, and literally shaken off the dust from his shoes upon the offender's doormat; telling her at the same time that God's curse would surely follow those who rejected His sacraments and shut their doors against the minister of His Word.

In that selfsame hour the Avenger which loosed the plagues upon gorgeous Egypt, and wrote the flaming message on Belshazzar's wall, swooped down and smote the firstborn in that shabby little house. Suddenly, and without warning, the fourteen-year-old girl was stricken with abject idiocy, and her whole body broke out from head to foot in the most loathsome sores. The doctors seemed unable to explain or relieve so phenomenal a seizure, but the heart of the mother struck the keynote within her. She remembered the warning of the afternoon, and she knew that through her sin the retributory hand of God had touched her child.

Maternity is the redeeming touch in many an abandoned soul. Before the evening was out, this angry, foul-tongued woman was a humble and contrite suppliant. Seeking out Mr. Lyne, through the mediation of a kindly District Visitor, she besought him to take pity on her, and revoke the awful judgment that had fallen on her house. Then the young Deacon knew that the Angel of the Lord was very near, and in silent and fervent prayer he sought to learn by what next step he could best show forth his Master's glory. "Go to this child," whispered the same Voice, the same supernatural impulse which had already made him pale and tremble before the sordid little altar of the grand old Spalding Church,—“go to this child in My Name,” It now urged persistently; and without more ado he went.

The Reverend Father can scarcely speak of the sights and sounds that awaited him in that stricken home. Those who have encountered idiocy in its acute phase, and the pollution of a skin corruption which renders the human

body a mere mass of septic contagion—those only can know what such a combination meant, within the limits of a small, ill-ventilated room. But the Voice had to be obeyed, and in his spirit Mr. Lyne already knew that the Mighty One was about to work a miracle through the intermedium of his own weak hands.

Going straight to the bedside, he laid his hands on the sufferer, and, calling on the Name of the Great Physician, commended her to His care. The prayer had scarcely left his lips when its answer came—the answer of an overwhelming mercy—the miracle of a complete cure. It was as though some Unseen Hand had stemmed the current of a deathly weir. In an instant the night had vanished and its shadows flown away. Intelligence flashed back, not in a glimmer, but a flood; and in the sight of all present, the disfigured flesh resumed its natural childish fairness and purity.

Mr. Lyne's first care was to carry his load of thanksgiving for Dr. Pusey's blessing. This great Churchman's reception of his spiritual son's disclosure was characteristic of himself. When he had heard the story from end to end, and spoken of the intense humility which alone should dignify the “chosen workers of great works,” he emphasised the necessity of guarding the occurrence from public notice or discussion. “You are too young,” were his words, “for the notoriety, whether favourable or the reverse, to be anything but a spiritual temptation and hindrance.”

Acting on his Confessor's counsel, Mr. Lyne set a fence of reticence around the entire circumstance; nevertheless, within the little circle of living testimony a very considerable substratum of commentary was inevitable. There were some that enthused, and others that merely chattered, but in the end Dr. Pusey's policy prevailed, and the penny-a-liners lost the scent. This was doubtless due to the fact that the world troubles itself little about religious phenomena, except they be so slenderly substantiated as to make pursuit a paying game. It was useless to dispute the fact of the girl's instantaneous recovery. There were

too many eye-witnesses extant for it to be possible to disparage the miracle on the grounds of its authenticity ; so the gossips were fain to let the subject subside into the famous silence which implies everything that it dares not utter. To Mr. Lyne himself, the comments of his parishioners were indifferent. He was preoccupied in pondering over the event, and recalling its wondrous details—the instantaneous drying-up of those dreadful sores, the sudden calm that fell like magic upon the poor disordered brain. And then followed the profound thanksgiving, the crushing humility that came pouring in, with the remembrance that it was *himself*—a young and unknown man—whom the Supreme had chosen to achieve this great thing.

When garnering in the materials for this volume, and storing the narratives of this and other miraculous cures, I have been induced to ask the Reverend Father why, if in possession of this superhuman gift of healing, he has not made more general use of it, for the good of his fellow-creatures. His answer throws a decisive light. "I can count the cures I have effected on my fingers," says he ; "and my 'gift,' as you call it, is not in my own hands, or to be invoked at my own discretion. I would no more dream of trying to cure any sick person without direct command to do so, than I would attempt to fly, having no wings. When God calls upon me, I am ready ; but I *wait*. I do not presume to anticipate, or even to suggest, save in prayer."

It is with personal satisfaction that I annex the sequel to the first Plymouth miracle. It commences with the conversion of the entire Egg or Hatch family, together with many of their neighbours, and finishes with the baptism of the girl herself, who, perfectly well, and in possession of all her faculties, received from Mr. Lyne (together with thirty-nine others) the Sacrament of Regeneration on the very next day—the Feast of the Ascension.

Before closing this chapter on miracles, and passing to the unfolding developments of the monastic vision, I must recount yet one other extraordinary instance—also a

Plymouth idyll—of the nameless *power* which at times, and for some mighty purpose, seemed delegated to this fragile but devoted pair of hands.

My readers are aware, doubtless, that Father Ignatius is the author of several well-known volumes both in prose and verse. While at Plymouth, and at the special request of his spiritual children, he wrote, amongst other things, an Altar Manual for the use of those attending Mass without communicating—a thing unheard of forty years ago. It was while in the act of returning the corrected proofs of this very Manual into the hands of the printers (Messrs. Jenkins & Thomas, Stonehouse, Plymouth) that the Spirit of God moved once more upon the face of the waters, and a second miracle, almost greater than the first, was vouchsafed, to emphasise, and in a way substantiate, the validity of its forerunner.

Mr. Lyne's business being duly transacted in the printers' warehouse, he made haste to betake himself home—a walk of some length. When already a considerable portion of the way had been accomplished (and those who know the Reverend Father, however slightly, can testify as to the quality of his break-neck speed), he was suddenly arrested by an unaccountable impulse—quite apart from desire—to retrace his steps. He knew not why or wherefore, but the conviction that he was needed grew stronger and stronger, and at last the Voice Itself whispered Its command, "Go back again! Go back again!" Almost reluctantly, he came to a dead halt, waited, listened, and finally turned upon his steps. He was already spent and weary, brain and physical labour were telling sorely on his delicate resources; but all bodily weakness was submerged in the great spiritual current that seemed sweeping him away. In an incredibly short time he re-entered the busy warehouse, mounted the stairs to the very room he had so lately quitted, and looked around to seek the reason of his summons. It was not far away. On the floor was gathered a struggling mass of humanity, consisting of a dozen men—one unfortunate, held forcibly down by many

others, who were doing their level best to prevent him from injuring himself cruelly in the frenzy of the seizure. It was an appalling spectacle, and on Mr. Lyne approaching and asking what was the matter, the men fell back and showed him the starting eyes and foam-covered lips of their unlucky comrade. "Don't know what it is, sir," said one of them dubiously, "but he seems more like possessed with a devil than anything else!"

The words were no sooner spoken and their significance but dimly realised, than Mr. Lyne was on his knees by the man. Laying his hands firmly on him, he cried with a loud voice, "In the Name of Jesus of Nazareth, I command thee, come out of this man!"

There was a breathless pause, then those assembled saw that a miracle—a mighty thing—had come to pass. The raving maniac lay weak and helpless as a little child at the feet of the man whose faith had made him whole. The impression which followed this occurrence baffles words. It was the more potent because so infinitely simple and unforeseen. "It's just like something out of the Bible," was the unsophisticated remark of one of the astonished bystanders. The poor patient lay inert, and resting as though in a deep sleep; and in this condition Mr. Lyne gave him over to the ministrations of his friends. It was a sight that is hardly seen twice in a century, the gathering of those rough working men around their unconscious comrade. His face bore the expression of a sleeping child, his whole attitude the abandonment of the unknottng of every nerve. The spectacle was overwhelming; but sceptics may expect a ray of light from the medico-rational side of the subject, and they shall not be disappointed. One of the most tangible features of this miracle is the subsequent bodily condition of the subject on whom it was wrought.

This man had been a prey to similar distressing seizures for years past, and he had suffered many things of many physicians, but in vain. Look upon that picture, and now upon its pendant! From the same instant that

the inspired hands touched him, he was delivered from all recurrence of these "fits," called by some epilepsy, by others hysterical phenomena, for want of a better name by which to identify these pitiful "possessions," that, like the demons who dispense them, are Legion—for they are indeed many.

A carefully compiled statement of this miraculous cure Mr. Lyne himself sent to the *Union*, the London "organ" of the High Church party, and precursor of the *Church Times*. In consequence of this article, and the effect it produced, a whole flood of letters was forwarded to him through the editorial office from all parts of the kingdom. As, however, the names of persons and locale were carefully eliminated from the paragraph, it brought its writer no individual reflection either of satire or glory.

Only once, during the process of collaboration, have I asked the Abbot of Llanthony an impertinent question, and it was the following:—"Have you never been tempted, Reverend Father, in recalling these miracles, or when realising the sway which you exercise over your congregations, to yield to a glow of personal satisfaction, or even pride?"

His answer was ready, but unfortunately it was accompanied by a facial *obbligato* which defies reproduction by letterpress. "The story of Balaam's ass," said he quietly, "has always been *my* specific for spiritual vanity. It shows me so distinctly the kind of animal our Lord chooses as the poor instrument of His greatness. Depend upon it, that miraculous quadruped is by no means the only ass who has spoken and acted in God's service. Have *you* never heard a donkey speak? *I* have, many a time. But, to be serious, there is no sweeter comfort in life than the knowledge that it is from amongst the weakest and most insignificant on earth that our dear Lord calls out His chosen vessels."

CHAPTER XII

"I SHALL NOT DIE, BUT LIVE"

"I could not think, O Holy Lord,
Such love could be for me!
I could not dare appropriate
Thy love so rich and free."

DESPITE the heavy strain of his parish duties, Mr. Lyne somehow managed in his off moments to mature and formulate into something tangible his hitherto visionary scheme of starting Community life for men in Plymouth. With the close proximity of such presiding spirits as Dr. Pusey and Miss Sellon to lend colour to the enterprise, he felt—not unreasonably—that it would not be a hopeless task to find other kindred souls who, like himself, felt called out of this busy world to seek the higher lights of a life apart, an existence given over to prayer and pious works.

One of his first steps was to start the "Society of the Love of Jesus," a species of Guild for men and boys, with a monastic flavour about it, inasmuch as its members were enrolled as Brothers, and that Mr. Lyne himself—or Brother Joseph, as he was then called—was constituted its Superior. When, after an enormous amount of personal labour, this infant Community could show a register of nearly forty members, it became necessary to place the whole concern on a more serious footing. For this purpose, and feeling somewhat handicapped by his own youth and inexperience, Mr. Lyne determined, though not without many a misgiving, to take counsel of the famous Abbess. His subsequent visit to her Convent, which followed close on this resolve, stamps the record of his first personal interview

with the woman who was destined to cast so strong a light upon his future. Both Canon Prynne and his wife discouraged the idea of this visit. It would be useless, they said, for him to present himself at the Abbey. Miss Sellon was a great invalid, and scarcely received any one, least of all a stranger; but Brother Joseph was not to be put off so easily, and to the Abbey he went all the same. Being of a naturally shy and nervous turn of mind, it was with some trepidation that he gave a pull at the big bell, and abided by the consequences. Nor were his feelings much relieved when the grille was gently opened, and a demure old voice asked "what she could do for him." His name and errand being duly explained, he once more awaited the result. To his astonishment, the message was a favourable one, and the next moment he found himself ushered by a sweet-faced nun into the presence he so longed and yet feared to penetrate.

Father Ignatius tells me that he will never forget his first impression of the Lady Abbess. She was lying down when he entered the room, for, being afflicted with a spinal weakness, she was obliged to pass much of her time on her chaise-longue. Miss Sellon was an excessively plain woman, but she had that about her which nevertheless commanded an admiration akin to awe. A peculiar charm of manner added to this individuality, and she had the rare faculty of putting her visitors at their ease from the very first moment—a genius which is seldom incorporate, and for that reason precious. "Come and sit down, Brother Joseph," was her kindly greeting to our Reverend Father. "I have heard so much about you already"; and, to her amusement, Mr. Lyne sat himself on a stool at her feet,—“just like one of my nuns,” as she herself remarked, when she observed the very lowly position he had chosen to assume.

The interview was a long and important one. Brother Joseph opened his heart to her as to a spiritual mother, and she on her side both cheered and encouraged him in his cherished aspirations, not forgetting to instruct him carefully and practically in the more material side of the

undertaking. The introduction to Dr. Pusey was the next step forward in the direction of the cloisters, and thus was formed and cemented a group of lifelong friendships—the most fruitful, perhaps, and certainly amongst the most important, of the many influences with which the mortal side of this biography is crossed and recrossed, like the lines on a complex diagram.

Out of all the members of the Society of the Love of Jesus, only two "Brothers" proved willing or canonically fitted to "leave all and follow" their Superior into the residence for solitaries and celibates which he proposed to establish. But, nothing daunted, and by Dr. Pusey's emphatic advice, Brother Joseph decided to start his Community, no matter on how small or modest a basis. And here it was that his good angel, Miss Sellon, came nobly to the fore. Once that she was convinced of her young friend's absolute sincerity, as well as of his personal capacity for carrying out so hazardous an undertaking, there was no stone that she left unturned, either in prayer, word, or deed. She both understood and sympathised with the strange and isolated position in which he was placed, and she determined to step into the breach with the authority and means at her disposal.

It came as a surprise to many, and a blow to a few, when the news got wind that the Lady Abbess had made over to the Curate of St. Peter's one of her very own Community houses, on indefinite loan, and as a nursery for the rearing and training of a curious mummy—the resurrectioned dust of over three centuries—the Monk of the English Church Catholic and Apostolic. Not so many of the heterogeneous Plymouth population were aware of the heavy significance of this apparently simple act, but both Dr. Pusey and Miss Sellon knew full well that the burning brand had at last reached the embers, and that the glow of a mighty battle would soon spread like a gigantic blush over the face of the religious sphere.

It was a strange combination, this trefoil of forces blending into one prolific leaf. Dr. Pusey, the sublime

torch-bearer of the Tractarian Reformation; and hand in hand with him the saintly Abbess Priscilla, that strong yet gentle incarnation of vertebrate spirituality, whose single arm had raised the corpse of consecrated womanhood in her Mother-Church. Then, last of all, their supplement, the delicate, almost boyish figure of the one whose voice was to go crying through the wilderness of an entire world.

But Brother Joseph was not destined to be a follower only. He was to outstep his pioneers, and plant an independent axe in the very core of Christendom. Nothing but this same element of energising vitality could have made their trinity complete. It was Brother Joseph who put the match to the heaped-up faggots—Brother Joseph alone who bore the brunt of the blaze.

Meanwhile he had written many home-letters concerning his new friends, the unexpected change which they had brought into his life, and the dim possibility of his childhood's dreams being realised at last. To Mr. Lyne senior these communications were gall and bitterness. He would almost sooner have known his son to be dead than see him a monk; but he appreciated the strength of the nature with which he had to deal, and feeling coercion to be impotent, he merely forbade his "offending child" to hold any communication with his brothers and sisters, "for fear he should contaminate them by his abominable 'Popish ideas.'" With his mother, Brother Joseph was more explicit. It was an interchange between the two of confidence and sympathy. Mrs. Lyne had long ceased even to endeavour to step in between her son's soul and what he believed to be its Divine call. With a woman's intuition, she foresaw at what a fearful cost of sorrow and suffering this summons was to be obeyed; but with a mother's heroism also, she forebore to intervene so much as her shadow between her child and the light in which he deemed it his duty to walk. There were no lamentations, not one of those fretful, half-implied reproaches in which femininity so dearly loves to seek relief. She merely felt the touch of the Master Hand, and bent beneath it. In years to come, she would often

listen to her Monk-son's eloquence with a rapture passing words. "To think that he is *my* child!" she remarked to a friend on one of these occasions; and then, at the mere thought of such a privilege, her fair face would flush, and a light come into her eyes, such as is only seen in one or two of the Old Masters' conceptions of the "Santissima."

By the time that Mr. Lyne had been nine months in his Plymouth curacy, he was almost prepared (as Brother Joseph) to take immediate possession of the Community House placed at his disposal through the generosity of Miss Sellon. The furniture and general "properties" necessary for the requirements of three poverty-vowed young men were simple enough; and in an incredibly short time everything was shipshape and ready for their reception. Amongst other arrangements, one of the chief rooms had been transformed into a chapel or oratory; and altogether the house presented the appearance of a plain but habitable Presbytery. Contributions both in kind and coin had been forthcoming from a few friends in the parish, so without undue extravagance they could afford a Crucifix for their little altar, and some candlesticks to go beside it. The two Brothers were the first to take possession of the new premises, and it was arranged that in the course of a day or so their Superior should follow. A very strange occurrence marked the advent of those two poor Brothers to their first religious home.

In the dead of night—it must have been somewhere about two o'clock—one of them was awakened by a bright light shining through the open door of his room. Seeing that his companion was asleep, and knowing that no other living soul was in the house, he became uneasy, fearing that a fire might have broken out. Before raising an alarm, he had the presence of mind to slip quietly out of bed and on to the landing that headed the stairs. The whole house seemed full of supernatural light, and, looking cautiously over the banisters to discover its cause, an extraordinary sight met his eyes. On the stairs below, and standing erect, without candlestick or any visible support, was one of the large

altar tapers in full blaze. The Brother knew that there were only two of this species in the place, and he had seen them *unlighted* in their candlesticks on the oratory altar before he went to bed. Hastily calling his fellow-Brother, he brought him quaking to the spot, and there the two stood, gazing speechless at the unaccountable evidence of their waking senses, while the taper burned steadily on. It is impossible to speculate how long it might have continued to do so, had not one of the two men finally raised it in his trembling hands and borne it back into the chapel. Here he carefully extinguished it, and replaced it in the empty candlestick.

It was with countenances of the tinge of cucumber that the terrified Brothers recounted their experience the next day; nor to this hour has it been explained—neither the occurrence itself nor its significance. That the men had been honestly frightened, the Reverend Father can himself attest, also that they were persons whose veracity he had never had occasion to doubt; but beyond these two points he reserves his opinion.

Dr. Pusey interpreted the manifestation as a Heaven-sent sign of Divine approval, and the lighted taper as an emblem of the illuminating influence which monasticism was to shed upon the Church. At the same time, he urged the Brothers and their Superior to treasure these marks of favour in the silence of their own spirits, and as things too sacred to be desecrated by the touch of public curiosity.

And now I have to chronicle a really pathetic climax to the Plymouth period. In spite of the happy and promising auspices under which Brother Joseph entered Community life, he was only in actual residence two short days. After all the labours, prayers, and bright anticipations of preparation, the whole scheme was to flutter to earth like a house built of cards. On the second day after the Superior had arrived and taken up his place in Community, he was seized with an acute attack of typhoid fever, which later developed into congestion of the brain. His friends

were in despair, and one of them—a certain Mrs. Pyne—came and had him carried away in her carriage to her own home at Stoke. It was of no avail! He grew worse and worse, and it seemed as though no amount of the most skilled medical care and nursing could avert a catastrophe. While still conscious, he made his preparation for death, received Sacramental Absolution, and what he believed to be his Viaticum. Then a period of intense agony followed. He lost all power of coherent speech and hearing; and except for a few rare intervals, all sense of memory too. The rest was a delirious nightmare, in the midst of which arose his old horror, the blight of his baby-days, the curse that had wrung his boyhood, his very manhood too, in its cold, cruel hand—the fear of hell.

As the fever heightened, this obsession grew more and more pitiful. At last the poor patient imagined himself to be actually undergoing the torments of the damned, and at times this anguish rose to such a pitch, that when it subsided he had the appearance of a tortured victim newly taken from the rack. It was from Dr. Pusey himself that the Message of Peace came—that Message which to this hour the Monk cannot recall without a thrill. Grieved and appalled as the great Churchman was to hear of his young friend's illness, the news of the despair within his soul afflicted him still more. Unable at the moment to leave his own heavy duties and obey the impulse of his heart, he resolved to do the next best thing—send a word of comfort in his Master's Name! These are the words which he pencilled, and caused to be carried forthwith to the sick-bed: "Do you think that our Lord would have allowed you to love and serve Him so long, if He had intended to let you perish?"

That was all, and very slowly and softly the Message was whispered into the seemingly dying ears. Only a few plain words, but they fell like drops of living water on a parched and burning earth. This was the second Message God had sent him, and it seemed to waft him back the echo of the old St. Pancras bell, the murmur of the

prayer that soothed him on his Confirmation Day. The same warm lull of comfort stole in upon him, the same sense of confidence and rest; and almost unconsciously, with the trustful impulse of a tired child, he sank into a deep sleep—somewhat after the manner of a storm-tossed frigate dropping anchor in a calm and sheltered bay.

"I shall not die, but live," were his first words (spoken to his mother) on awaking from this deathlike slumber. At the moment, this sanguine prophecy was looked upon as part and parcel of his delirium; but as time went on it was magnified into an inspiration. Gradually but surely, the conviction that his sickness was not unto death gained ground and credence. His intervals of unconsciousness became rarer and milder, and at last it was apparent even to the uninitiated that the worst was over, and he was indeed to "live and declare the works of the Lord."

"I want you to make special mention of Dr. Pusey's Message," said the Reverend Father, as he handed me the keys to this portion of his story, "for it embodies the second great thought of my life—that is to say, the second time that I had found real consolation in my religion. How I bless the St. Pancras bells, and dear Dr. Pusey, when I think of them!"

When this dangerous illness occurred, Mrs. Lyne happened unfortunately to be abroad, but the very first intimation brought her to the nearest point of embarkation. Here, however, another hindrance awaited her. The hurricanes were fearful. Steamers were only running with difficulty and irregularity, and she was forced to postpone her journey from day to day. It is useless to enlarge on the suffering this delay must have occasioned. Mothers will understand, and for the rest, they are out of range.

When the crossing was finally accomplished, things were already looking up at Stoke, and Mrs. Lyne had the inexpressible joy of finding her favourite child not only in full possession of all his faculties, but distinctly convalescent.

Brother Joseph was at the best of times a mere shadow

of a man, and his dangerous illness had reduced this shadow to a breath. Mrs. Lyne was hardly prepared for a condition of such extreme weakness and attenuation, and it impressed her painfully. Nevertheless, she had tested of old his extraordinary powers of recuperation, and this recollection gave her hope.

It would have been interesting to have analysed the feelings of the Monk's father at this critical period. There is no record wherewith to surmise the effect of his son's encounter with the Great Reaper on this strange, self-centred nature. Our only light comes through the chinks of inference—the obvious deduction from the next landmark thrown upon the screen.

It is a restful family picture, that of the convalescent, strong with youth and renewed spiritual vigour, being nursed out of his physical weakness in the natural haven of his father's house. In obedience to the medical oracle, a great enterprise was under discussion—that of a prolonged tour abroad, on which the patient was to be accompanied by both parents, his sisters, and one younger brother, by way of bodyguard.

This must have been a bitter moment in the Monk's life, but there was no alternative. For a time at least he was forced to exchange the ascetic Rule for the doctors' régime, and to bear the blow of an undeserved failure—almost the sharpest rod that can fall upon humanity. The curacy at St. Peter's, Plymouth, had to be summarily cancelled, and the unlucky Community House forthwith closed. The two Brothers were temporarily sheltered through the kindly hospitality of Dr. Pusey, but the general upheaval was tremendous, and the sorrow it awakened both widespread and sincere. Whether in his capacity of Superior, Friend, or Curate, Brother Joseph had won many hearts as well as many souls in Plymouth, and now—until years later, when as a world-wide celebrity he was destined to revisit his old scenes of labour and ministry—the place thereof should know him no more.

The affectionate welcome accorded to Father Ignatius

by both Canon Prynne and his wife, when he paid them a visit during one of his famous Mission circuits, gives a delightful touch of "auld lang syne." "I worship the very air he breathes," said the dear old lady, as she tried to realise that the black-robed, shaven-headed Monk was indeed a transposed edition of the eloquent and delicate boy-Deacon whom she had "mothered" in the days that were fled.

CHAPTER XIII

"IN JOURNEYINGS OFTEN"

"Twas sweet to hear the peasants raise
The Holy Vesper Prayer ;
They seemed to speak as tho' the Lord
Unseen was present there."

IF Mr. Lyne the elder entertained the fag end of a hope that change of scene might shake the "monastic fiddlesticks" out of his son's mind, he certainly took him to the last locality on earth calculated to further such a benign purpose. Those who know Belgium ever so little, cannot but be aware that it is the hotbed of Catholicism in miniature. With the Belgian citizen, policy and religious opinion are synonymous sounds, so closely do they overlap. To a certain extent this seething little country is a house divided against itself, being on perpetual parade in two sections—the Scarlet Party, and the Blue. Of these, the former represents the Conservatives, otherwise Catholics, and the latter, the Liberals, or Free Thinkers.

There generally reigns a good deal of animosity between these rival factions, but as this is mostly distilled into the venom of political undercurrent, it is not apparent to the eyes of a foreign visitor, who naturally bases his judgment on the smoothness of the upper crust, without waiting to analyse the quality of the dough. And the veneer of Belgium is undoubtedly its Catholicity—the patriotic tradition which chimes its magnificent bells once in every eight minutes, and carries its *Bon Dieu* unblushingly through the open streets.

To the devout passer-by (especially if a new-comer), the religious impression of a visit to Belgium must be emotional

in the extreme. It is not difficult to imagine the effect of these sublime sights and sounds on a sensitive, predisposed mind, just imported from the icebergs of sober Anglican ritual. Yet, stirred with the deepest enthusiasm as he was, for all he saw and heard, and impregnated as he *must* have been with the pervading atmosphere of fervent Popery, it never seems that our Reverend Father experienced the least inclination to shift his allegiance from His Grace of Canterbury to the Prisoner King at the Vatican. His inspirations took an altogether different turn. He longed to transfuse into his Anglican Communion some portion, if not all, of her Roman sister's beauty—the bright, warm beauty which had entered even into his very soul. Here are his own words: "My monastic vocation was deepening every day. I longed to be, to our beloved Church of England, what Père Lacordaire and other religious men were to the Churches of France and Belgium."

In the meantime, he wrote frequently and fully to his spiritual father and mother—Dr. Pusey and Miss Sellon—laying before these sympathetic friends every vibration of his inmost being. He told them of the barefooted Friars who walked unmolested through the public streets, and how he knelt and kissed their scapulars as they passed him by. But above all he dwelt on the strange thrill of affinity which smote him every time he came in contact with their sombre habits and tonsured crowns. In the same breath he laid bare his own soul, confided to them the desire of his heart, and declared his irrevocable determination to serve God henceforth in the official uniform of the man taken out of the world.

That this bold and dangerous resolve met with the entire approval of these distinguished personages, I need not say. Brother Joseph's monastic vocation was a source of the deepest interest to them both, as the following incident will express. Neither the Lady Abbess nor the experienced Priest looked on the Plymouth calamity as anything but an unfortunate pause in the great revival which they knew was kindling beneath the surface of that

weak, youthful physique—they never once dreamed of a possible turning back from the plough. Even during the early stages of convalescence in his father's house in London, Brother Joseph was honoured with a token of his friends' confidence and support. Miss Sellon caused his first monastic habit to be fashioned by one of her nuns in the Abbey Convent, and Dr. Pusey having solemnly considered the same, it was duly despatched by him to Montagu Square, where its owner-designate was then staying.

Unfortunately, Mr. Lyne senior was on the alert for danger-signals, and a parcel from the Plymouth Abbey was in itself suggestive of the red lights. His son being conveniently out of the way at the moment of its arrival, the spirit of No Popery urged him to satisfy both curiosity and the pangs of fatherly concern. He carried the parcel to his own sanctum, and, having examined its contents, he quietly confiscated them, and held his peace.

Only when in Belgium, and through a subsequent letter from Dr. Pusey, did Brother Joseph learn the fate of his missing habit, and needless to add, he was not unnaturally seriously annoyed. However, the matter was amended by the sending of a second edition of both habit and approval, and this time measures were taken that the property should be delivered to its lawful owner. It was while still in Brussels, and at the Redemptorists' Church of St. Joseph, during solemn Benediction, that the Reverend Father first put off secular dress. There are (I believe) some portraits still extant of him in this very same habit, which must on no account be confounded with the one he assumed later, as the leader of the Benedictine Revival in the British Church.

The Sellon-Pusey garment was a simple monastic dress, consisting of the rough serge cassock and hood belonging to no special monkish denomination; whereas the more recent one is the distinct "regimental" of the Ancient Order of St. Benedict of Nursia—such as it was, before the blast of the so-called Reformation came to shatter the unanimity of the Faith of the Land. While in Belgium,

where monasteries and convents are planted almost as thickly as plums in a cake, the Rev. J. L. Lyne had every opportunity of studying a diversity of Rules and their sources; but as yet he had made no definitive choice of a banner under which to enlist his zeal. He was already a Monk in the eyes of God and His Church, having sealed an irrevocable promise with the Supreme Superior of All Things, to live the life of prayer and sacrifice which alone constitutes the essence and glory of the Monastic Intention.

"My aim," says the Reverend Father, when referring to this period, "was to discover a Rule which, by its antiquity and conservatism, should render its observance consistent with fidelity to the English Church."

It must be clearly understood that it was not during his stay in Belgium that Mr. Lyne *adopted* the Benedictine Code. He was merely impressed by its comprehensive adaptability—as an Order which as far back as the sixth century had received the approval of the Western Church, and that of the British section of Christendom as early as the Primacy of the great St. Dunstan himself. Moreover, there was not a single article of its Rule that an Anglican could not profess with a quiet conscience and an orthodox mind.

I am now going to anticipate somewhat, in order to answer a question which is frequently suggested by outsiders, and at times even by those who should know better. "How," says this chorus, "can 'Mr. Lyne' call himself Father Ignatius and a Benedictine, when the Order is a Roman one, and he openly ignores the doctrine of Papal Infallibility? By whom was he made a Monk and a Father-Abbot at all?" I believe one wag went so far as to crow to the following effect—that the Monk of Llanthony had "no more right to appear in the habit of St. Benedict, than he had to assume the blue coat and cocked hat of an Admiral of the Fleet."

Will this lady or gentleman, and others of that ilk, have the kindness to refer the matter to the Monastic Oracle, Montalembert? In his classic work, *The Monks of*

the West, they will find repletion for their spirit of research, and likewise appreciate my reason for stating that the original Benedictine Order was a Catholic but independent Congregation.

The Abbot of Llanthony and Monk of the British Church follows on the footprints of his saintly predecessor—only with this difference: St. Benedict was an absolute Founder; his more modern representative, a Regenerator within the pale of Anglican limitations. Father Ignatius, by a retrograde inspiration, holds the reins of the primitive mediæval Benedictinism of the early centuries. The See of St. Peter's commands (as it does all post-Reformation allegiances) a modified and revised edition of the same. When the Saint of Nursia laid the corner-stone of his immortal Order, his methods were primitive and self-contained. He vowed three vows unto God, and lived up to them! When others joined him in his holy endeavours, he became their spiritual Father, received their oaths of fealty as their Representative and Superior, and devised a Rule and habit for their edification and as a distinctive mark of their calling. No formula of words, however beautiful, no benediction of any dignitary, however high, can make a Monk or unmake one. Monasticism is a solemn compact between God and an individual soul. The habit, the tonsure, are things of naught in comparison with the life led by that soul in the body which enfolds it.

So thought St. Benedict. History hands down the story of his ministry, its marvellous propaganda, and the undying influence it was to hold upon the Church; but not once do we read of this Founder of one of the most ancient and flourishing Orders being "made a Monk" either by vows taken to mortal man, or by consent and patronage of the official See. Although living and working in the Papal Diocese, the Saint did not seek its blessing or endorsement. He looked upon the dedication of his life from the devout standpoint only, and as an independent and personal act—nothing more.

No one has ever sought to undermine the validity of

St. Benedict's claims, any more than they have doubted the Heaven-born Mission of the man sent from God "whose name was John." Everything in this world is bound to have a beginning, and it is about as intelligent to question the authority of the Founder of the great Anglo-Benedictine Revival as to ask point blank who baptized John the Baptist. As balm to the scrupulous, however, I may subjoin the reassuring fact that our Reverend Father did actually (on definitely assuming the Rules and robe of St. Benedict) register his vows, as an act of supererogation, in presence of the Rev. George Drury, Rector of Claydon (at that time his Confessor), and that with the emphatic blessing of a Bishop of the Scottish Episcopal Church. This is what Dr. Forbes—a great saint as well as Bishop of Brechin—wrote to the young Monk: "I thank God for putting it into the heart of a Deacon of our Church to restore the Rule of St. Benedict in our midst."

The above digression is not tipped with the desire to suggest any ancient rift between the Chair of St. Peter and its most faithful Congregation of St. Benedict. I am only anxious to sweep away the cobwebs which may disguise the outlines of its first basis—such as its saintly Founder created it, and intended it to be. Later events, and in especial the upheaval of the Reformation, naturally shook the spiritual equilibrium of the land; and when the tug of war came, the Ecclesiastical Wing gathered in the faithful under her metamorphosed shadow. But the setting of the Papal Seal on the surviving Order of St. Benedict was a distinctly gratuitous and supplementary measure, and in no wise a by-law of its original constitution. Here are Montalembert's own words on the subject. They occur in the "Columbanus" chapter of his famous work. "Nor had Benedict, any more than Columbanus either, sought or obtained during his lifetime the sovereign sanction of the Papacy for his institution. . . . Long after his death . . . Pope Gregory the Great *spontaneously* impressed the Seal of Supreme Approbation upon the Benedictine Rule." (The two suspensions in this quotation are due to intermediate

irrelevancy and the author's desire to avoid the superfluous.) The Right Reverend Abbot of Llanthony does not pose as a clever, Parisian-diamond kind of counterfeit of the modern and Romanised Benedictine. Were this so, he would lead a far easier and pleasanter life. Father Ignatius represents himself to be just exactly what he is—the one and only Perpetuator of the Ancient Rule, such as its great Founder conceived it, and bequeathed it to his children, for their light and guidance. This primitive code, which is remarkable for its uncompromising austerity, is based on an absolutely Catholic foundation. It differs only from its revised version in the greater severity of its discipline, and a conspicuous absence of modern-mindedness. The Reformed Rule, on the other hand, which has been subjected to subdivision into separate Congregations, bears distinct finger-marks of the characteristic touches that are inseparable from Roman jurisdiction.

I have now placed St. Benedict and his nineteenth-century representative in the scale comparative, with the intention of demonstrating that, in the main, their positions are identical, so far as their monastic pretensions are concerned. With this balance of inference placed in full sight of my readers, I leave them to the entertainment of their own deductions—a feast of reason to which admission is absolutely free.

There are many minor points in the Reverend Father's Belgian experiences which I should dearly like to mention in these pages—such as his intervention and intercession in a pathetic family love-affair, and several other little traits which deal even more nearly with his own unofficial individuality; but the limitations of a single volume forbid me to wander from my central figure into background.

The six months of rest and change of scene had wrought wonders in the way of health and renewed nervous vigour, and Mr. Lyne began once more to grow restless, under the impression that he was standing idle, instead of labouring in God's vineyards. To take up the broken

threads of his Plymouth Community was out of the question, for the doctors absolutely forbade the strain of any such acute tension of responsibility for some time to come. His father was of course anxious that his son should cast off his "eccentricities," and settle down into some easy-going curacy like an ordinary Christian; but "once a Monk always a Monk" was the invariable reply which baffled these well-meant arguments, and left the future as involved as ever and as difficult to manipulate. Mrs. Lyne's heart was with her child, and her loving sympathy never ceased to light him through these painful clouds of indecision and unrest.

Then all at once the air cleared, and the situation became definite. By a chance introduction, our Reverend Father became acquainted with the Rev. Bryan King, who in his turn passed his new friend on to the Rev. Father Lowder, the hard-working and zealous Anglican Priest who led the Mission in that terrible and densely-populated quarter known to Londoners as St. George's in the East. Father Lowder happened to be taking a holiday in Belgium with his fellow-worker, Mr. King, when he first made the Monk's acquaintance, and from the very outset of their intercourse he was strangely won by the young man's earnest intensity and the brilliant capacity he evinced for specialising out of the ordinary walks of the sacred ministry. By a strange coincidence, one of his own assistant clergy—no other than the "notorious" A. H. Mackonochie—was leaving to take up the rectorship of St. Alban, Holborn, and without even the semblance of preliminary flourishes, Father Lowder invited Mr. Lyne to step into the gap. It was no light offer, but the experienced East End Missioner was a man of discrimination and decision. The fragile appearance of the young Deacon found no weight in his judgment. He could tell at a glance what dwelt within the veil—the great, brave spirit that was seeking rest and finding none, in a life of comparative restraint and idleness.

This offer—a remarkable instance of the sympathy

which is sometimes a ready-made bond between utter strangers and opposites—was no sooner made than it was accepted. Mr. Lyne, from the very breaking of the nursery egg-shell, had always preferred the extraordinary walks of life rather than its beaten tracks, and here was at once a field of endless harvests amongst the outcasts of a giant city, and the opening out of an illimitable vista of monastic possibilities. It is not every man who would have relished the prospect of a soul-to-soul contact with sin and sorrow such as is to be met at every corner of a Mission centred in the Dock districts of our crowded capitals.

St. George's in the East was already famous for its choking population, its police raids and murderous street-brawls, besides other moral or immoral characteristics more easily imagined than described. But to Mr. Lyne this side of the horizon was an incentive rather than the reverse, and the pact was speedily signed and sealed.

Not long afterwards, he was formally installed in his East End Mission, and began his hand-to-hand conflict with all that can be saddest, baddest, and maddest, in the heart of this sinful world. What this work of exhumation amongst the lowest and most degraded must have meant to so young and delicate a man, those who have touched the outer fringe of such an encounter can best judge.

The Lord had need of him, and that was enough! It must have been at this same moment—one of the spiritual monuments in his career—that some kind angel must have crossed his dreams, and dropped the mantle of the soldier-saint of Loyola upon his sleeping soul.

There is a dual significance about this East End episode. Two famous men were destined to fill the same post, work the same work, and in a measure stand the fire of the same shot. First, the much persecuted and maligned Priest of Holborn, who, after years of toil and torment, gave back his spirit on the summit of the snowy mountain, with none to see its flight save the eyes of a faithful dog; and secondly, the Monk of Llanthony, the still more persecuted and misrepresented branch of hyssop, born to purge his country's

Church! The analogy between these two suggests reflection; but it merges into mystery. The one has been taken, the other left. The first has many imitators, the second none—a singular illustration of the diversity of gifts by the same Spirit.

CHAPTER XIV

“THE DEAD ARE RAISED”

“Oh help us, that we may receive
The Sacred Pledge aright ;
Receive our fasting, hear our prayers,
On this most holy night.”

I WONDER if many of my readers are acquainted with Wellclose Square, London, E. Perhaps there are even a few who remember it as far back as 1862, in the primitive days of the High Church Movement, when cassock and biretta were regarded as distinctive marks of the Beast, and the glimmer of an altar light as nothing less than a reflection from the regions said to be paved with the mosaics of human intentions.

For the benefit of those whose walks and dreams have not led them beyond the Mayfair or Piccadilly of the British Babylon, I had better add, that St. George's Mission is situated in a densely-populated East End district, right in the heart of the Dock outpourings from all quarters and denominations in the world. The presence of foreign sailors was in those days—as doubtless it still is now—one of the leading features of the locality, and the constant “free fights” which these cosmopolitan visitors indulged in, not the least amongst its characteristic elements. If the hard-worked police officers had a bad time of it, in the exhilarating atmosphere of the street riots, public-house brawls, and other branches of their supervisory duties, it may be imagined that the priests fared still worse. Those of the Wellclose Square Mission seemed in especial to be chosen objects of offence and aversion, and at times this species of tacit animosity assumed even an active and

formidable shape. Several of the district clergy were subjected to personal insults and attacks in the open streets, and in one case (that of the Rev. Mr. Bryan King) a very valuable life was well-nigh forfeited. Low music-halls, dancing-rooms, and gin-palaces formed the staple entertainments of the neighbourhood, and the attitude which the Missioners felt themselves bound to assume when dealing with these popular idols, either from the pulpit or in their more individual ministrations, naturally provoked a fire of protest from the mob. Those who have ever peeped into the *inner* life led two scores of years back in the purlieus of the Commercial Road, Whitechapel, and Ratcliff Highway (now St. George's Street, E.), can form some approximate notion of the moral and spiritual climate into which our Reverend Father found himself transported, straight from the decorous formalism of Catholic Belgium. In the present day, and thanks to God's special blessing on His Mission-workers, this acute situation is greatly modified, though much still remains to be done and undone.

It must have been a psychological earthquake, to exchange the humdrum piety of the orthodox Cathedral cities for this whirlpool of human misery and degradation in the slums and alleys of the swarming London Docks. The revulsion must have been overwhelming, the sense of loathing almost beyond control, except to the man who from the faintest scent of battle drew in the breath of life.

Mr. Lyne's ministry at St. George's in the East lasted nine months, and he figured as one of a small group of Missioners. St. Saviour's Church (the chapel of ease of St. Peter's, London Docks) was set in the midst of the quaint old Square, and the Clergy House at one side of it. The schools formed part of the same nucleus, and a narrow and overcrowded foot-passage gave the connecting link between Wellclose Square and its nearest thoroughfare — Ratcliff Highway.

Mr. Lowder's own words on the subject of his young coadjutor's work in this difficult and dangerous search for souls will be the strongest light I can bring to bear upon

this page. In a letter written by him in 1871, the following remarks occur: "I have always felt a sincere regard for Brother Ignatius. While he was with us, he was very useful and energetic in his work. He made his influence very widely felt in the conversion of souls to God, some of whom I still know to be living as good and sincere Christians. As a preacher he had great power, and I have ever wished to see him in a position where his talents, which are very great, might be wisely directed to the service of God and the welfare of the Church. I found him very amiable as a member of our Mission House, and I believe him to be very sincere and single-minded."

As an appendix to this testimony of Mr. Lyne's personal popularity both as a zealous worker and an agreeable inmate of the Mission Residence, I must not forget to mention the very special sympathy which his delicate and youthful appearance seems to have aroused in the female department of the parish potentates. Foremost amongst these kindly allies, and with a bright halo of remembrance around her homely face and figure, stands the Infant School Mistress—a certain Miss Kitchen, to whose overflowing goodness of heart the transparent proportions of the "poor dear young gentleman" were sources of almost motherly solicitude. Unlike her prototype at Inverness, Miss Kitchen was never so happy as when Mr. Lyne was in her schoolroom, or she could persuade him to swallow some of the nourishing decoctions which she was for ever preparing for him, in her scanty off-times.

Miss Kitchen bore the blushing honours of her suggestive name with meekness but distinction. She prided herself on her culinary powers, and every one in Wellclose Square knew that her speciality was "h'excelle't soup." Of this exhilarating liquid, many and fragrant were the cups that found their way to the Mission House, together with the entreaty that Mr. Lyne would "just take a little, to do him good." There was a comic touch in poor Miss Kitchen's pathos, for the reason that, being afflicted with a somewhat intricate nasal conformation, she was unable to include an *m* or *n* in

her elaborate vocabulary. So her affectionate messages, often sent by her pupil-teacher and factotum,—a girl of sixteen, named Jane,—were dictated something after the following: "Dow, Jade, take this h'over to the Bissiod 'Ouse and h'ask for Bister Lyde. You bust say, 'H'if you please, sir, Biss Kitchéd 'opes you'll h'accept a little of 'er h'excelle't soup.'" Both "Jade" and the "h'excelle't soup" were so often to be seen at No. 44 Wellclose Square, that they soon became by-words amongst its inmates.

"Well, Jade, have you brought some more h'excelle't soup?" was the greeting which invariably met the poor pupil-teacher, when she appeared with her suggestive jug; and this little volley of satire being duly reported to Miss Kitchen, that good-natured soul determined to scatter the flight of her revilers' arrows. Next time that the historical "Jade" came upon the scene, it was with a new and improved formula, delivered with a nervous tremolo: "Please, sir, Miss Kitchen sends you some be-ootiful soup . . . yes . . . be-ootiful . . . she says I'm not to say 'h'excelle't' no more." So the record was broken; but from that day forward the name of Kitchen was metamorphosed by the merry Missioners into the still less poetical sobriquet of "Beautiful Soup."

Turning to altogether the deeper side, it must be admitted that Mr. Lyne's nine months' walks and talks in this East London Mission meant a time of extraordinary blessing to many hundreds of souls. To himself it was a continuous proof of Divine Omnipotence, and the mysterious persistency with which that Supreme Power elects to manifest Itself through the young, the weak, and almost the unknown. I am now going to relate a remarkable instance of the very special inspirations which from time to time our Reverend Father has received, quite apart from his individual endowments or voluntary intentions, and as it were in brief and rare flashes, for the working out of some great end. It would almost seem that these moments of supernatural overshadowing have been absolutely impersonal—mere loans of privilege, rather than abiding gifts. Comparatively speaking,

these occasions' have been few, and the transmissions of grace once accomplished, the power has been each time recalled and held in abeyance until the next imperative season of work and wonderment.

One night in the year 1862, the sleepers in the Well-close Square Mission House were awakened (as they often were) by the ringing of the night-bell. The applicant proved to be a poor woman whom they all knew well, who came to beg the assistance of a priest for her daughter, a young girl of nineteen, who was dying of typhoid fever. It was already past midnight, and the woman's home happened to be a very long way off; but the duty was obvious, and, tired as they were with a heavy day's work, two of the Missioners decided to set out on this errand of mercy. These two were Mr. Joseph Redman (Master of the Calvert Street School) and the Rev. J. L. Lyne—the latter because the sick girl was personally known to him, being a member of his own particular little flock.

In Mr. Redman's possession was a precious treasure—a Relic of the True Cross, which he had been fortunate enough to purchase at the sale of a well-known Roman Catholic nobleman's effects. Just as they were starting out, the remembrance of this sacred fragment seemed to strike Mr. Lyne with startling significance. It was an impression not to be ignored. "Do bring your Relic," was all he said to his friend, as they completed their hurried preparations; but the words were destined to be prophetic, and the splinter from the Tree of Calvary went with them through the muffled jostle of the belated streets. Those who have seen the heart of Whitechapel during the small hours—and especially over forty years ago—need no details of the sights and sounds which accompanied that memorable midnight pilgrimage. The walk was a long one, and in spite of their rapid pace it was impossible for Mr. Lyne and his companion to reach their destination till past one o'clock a.m.

A truly pathetic scene awaited them—they were too late! Lizzie Meek had passed away nearly two hours before, and the grief of the poor mother knew no bounds. She was

seated disconsolately by her dead child, and with her were three neighbours, two young children and their mother—a respectable woman of the name of Christian, who came forward on seeing Mr. Lyne, to give him details of the girl's last moments. She had died very soon after her mother had left the house to seek assistance at the Presbytery. All eyes were naturally turned to the central figure in this weird picture—the silent occupant of the shabby bed—and a single look sufficed to proclaim the presence of the King of Sleep. The body was decently composed for burial, every line of face and figure expressing the unmistakable touch which the hand of Death alone can give. We all know the stillness of the death-chamber. Rich and poor alike, we all have felt the white hush of the unfolded wings that hover now and then over our homes, whether they be the palaces of kings or the one-roomed squalor of a filthy slum. It was this same silence, unlike all others, which held the breath of those who stood watching Lizzie Meek in her last sleep—in this ineffable atmosphere, also, that the Divine whisper sounded in that soul to whom similar opportunities had already been accorded for showing forth his Master's glory.

Acting on an involuntary impulse, which he felt to be inspired, Mr. Lyne took the Relic of the Cross and laid it on the dead girl's breast. Then, with an emphatic utterance that thrilled all present, he repeated the Apostolic command, "In the Name of Jesus Christ, I say unto thee, Arise!"

It was the work of a moment, but so unprepared were they all—Mr. Redman included—either for the action or words, that their effect was almost overpowering. But a greater shock was to follow. No sooner had the sublime adjuration left Mr. Lyne's lips, than the right hand of the corpse was seen to raise itself slowly and stiffly (more with the measured pace of an automaton than that of a human being), and to trace a distinct Cross in the air. This done, the hand dropped slowly to the side again, but not before other phenomena were becoming apparent. Mr. Redman, pale as death, rushed forward and grasped Mr. Lyne by

the arm. "What have you done, Mr. Lyne?" he said breathlessly, "what have you done?" "*I* have done absolutely nothing," was the quiet answer, "but our Lord has done a great thing indeed." "Look what is happening!" Mr. Redman went on excitedly; and in an instant his cry was taken up by the terrified little assembly. A rush was made to get a nearer view of the bed, but this was firmly suppressed by Mr. Lyne, who would only suffer the mother to approach.

The sight was a stupendous one! Not even the most callous and unbelieving can well deny the testimony of their own eyes; and though some, I know, have been called to rest, there may be still one or more of those five witnesses who can yet remember how they saw the dead girl raised by the touch of the Holy Cross, laid on her breast by the Rev. Joseph Leycester Lyne.

The process of this resurrection can hardly be said to have been sudden, but at the same time it was swift and complete. When the gesture of the dead right hand subsided, unmistakable signs of the return of life pervaded the entire personality. A faint dilation of the nostrils could be observed, and a tinge of colour in the waxen lips and cheeks. Gradually but surely these symptoms became more apparent, till at length, with a deep-drawn respiration that was almost a sob or a sigh, the girl opened her eyes and sat bolt upright. It was a psychological moment, and the stupefaction written on the faces of those present, a sight and a revelation. Mr. Lyne assumed the initiative with his usual simplicity. "Give her some soup to drink," was all he said; but he stayed to see his orders obeyed, and to satisfy himself that the resuscitated could really swallow like any other ordinary mortal. The climax of the last few minutes seemed already too overwhelming to be real, but it was only in its sequel that the magnitude and exquisite mercy of the miracle were fully revealed. God never does things by halves, and He had not given back this poor girl's spirit without condescending to the needs of her body also. From the moment that Lizzie Meek sat up

a resurrectioned being, on what had so lately been her deathbed, she received a new lease of life both temporal and spiritual. She was not only revived into the phase of disease and suffering from which Death had set her free, she was completely and supernaturally cured! In Llanthony Monastery the Abbot still possesses an item of furniture known as "Lizzie Meek's Chair." This is a carefully preserved memento from the little Whitechapel room in which the above miracle took place, and was presented to the Reverend Father by Mrs. Meek, as the only token of thanksgiving she could offer him.

By mutual consent, and remembering the wise counsels of Dr. Pusey, both Mr. Redman and Mr. Lyne decided to guard the events of this night of wonder, so far as lay in their power, from the public eye and tongue. In the neighbourhood itself, however, a great sensation ensued. It was a fiery nine days' wonder, which smouldered slowly; but Whitechapel is a busy place, and its inhabitants more inclined to commerce than mysticism, so the ashes grew cold and grey at last. It is sad, yet an almighty proof of the delegated power which God sees fit to transmit to His ministers, to follow the footprints of the Lizzie Meek episode even to the final marks upon the sand.

No sooner was the miracle accomplished, and its emotion somewhat calmed, than Mr. Lyne sought to make the girl realise the very special grace she had received, and its extraordinary significance. "This life which God has given you back," said he, "is not your own, but His, to be dedicated to His service only, and kept for the Master's use." And in this strain he exhorted her to show herself worthy of the great and mysterious purpose for which her spirit had been returned by the God who gave it. Mrs. Meek fully endorsed Mr. Lyne's opinion, that dedication to the religious life was the most suitable way in which her daughter could repay the Divine loan she had received in the shape of renewed earthly existence, and Lizzie herself professed to be of the same opinion. She received Mr. Lyne's ministrations with apparent docility, and declared

herself ready to submit to his judgment in all things connected with her spiritual welfare.

After due time and preparation, Mr. Lyne placed his protégée with the Sisters of the Sacred Heart at Ascot, where the first convent of enclosed nuns since the Reformation was flourishing under the charge of the famous Abbess, Priscilla Sellon. Naturally, when all the circumstances of the case were fully known, a very special interest was felt by the kind Sisters in the new-comer, and it was arranged that the postulancy of Lizzie Meek should commence forthwith.

Before, however, any such decisive measure could be taken, the shadow of a man intervened, and pulverised the girl's future into dust. This unlucky individual was an old sweetheart, to whom Lizzie had once been engaged, and who suddenly turned up from some remote West Indian colony, where every one supposed him to be settled or buried. To make matters worse, he was a "coloured" man; but even this consideration seemed powerless to undermine the old charm and influence, and no sooner did the news of his arrival reach the quiet Ascot Home, than the girl was mad to leave it, and throw all her dreams of spiritual consecration to the four winds.

Even Mr. Lyne's powers of argument and persuasion seemed unable to convince her of the sin and folly of so repulsive an infatuation. She was determined to marry the man, and marry him she would, in spite of all that her friends and well-wishers could urge to the contrary. Seeing the case was hopeless, Mr. Lyne left her to follow her own headstrong course. In his final interview, he warned her solemnly, and more in sorrow than in anger, that so sure as she forsook God for man, the retributory Hand would rest upon her and her fellow-sinner to the end of their earthly days.

The finale is short and tragical! Undeterred by her spiritual Father's prophetic words, Lizzie Meek married the dusky object of her affections, and within one month of the wedding-day both husband and wife were dead and in their graves.

Mr. Lyne's experiences during his East End Mission work were happily not all of so strenuous or gloomy a cast. His influence and personal sway amongst even the most godless and abandoned of his flock were very great, and the reckless coolness with which he plunged into the midst of the street-fights and drunken crowds, no matter how abusive or excited they might be, gained him the respect of those who railed the loudest against the priests and Churches. They might curse his office, but in their hearts they blessed the man who was not afraid to risk his own life to save his fellows from the fires of their own degraded passions. From the Mission House windows a superb view of these battle-scenes could be obtained. The panorama included two seething thoroughfares, and on Saturday nights in particular these highways were lively. Mr. Lyne's fellow-clergy were rather nervous of their companion's summary raids upon nocturnal brawlers, and at the least sign of an approaching crowd, it was always—"Now, *pray* don't rush out, Mr. Lyne! We don't want all that rabble about the house!"

But nine times out of every ten, rush out he did, and on two of these occasions the result was comical beyond words. One evening a veritable upheaval took place. Two "ladies" engaged in personal combat over one man. Not content with attacking each other with all the feline fury of which the gentle sex is capable, they finally fell upon the cause of their jealousy, and amongst other delicate demonstrations literally gnawed one of his fingers to the bone. The commotion aroused by this feat of amazonian prowess reached the peaceful Mission House just as its inmates were seated at dinner, and in an instant, despite the indignant entreaties of his colleagues, our Reverend Father was in the thick of the fray. In less time than it takes to record the deed, he had thrown himself between the rival Roses, rescued their victim, and borne him in triumph to No. 44. A moment later, the doorstep, and indeed the entire Square, was besieged by a howling mob, who commenced battering the door and demanding their lawful prey.

Mr. Lyne was by this time busily washing and binding up the unfortunate man's wound, and only when this operation was concluded did he pay the slightest heed to the outside clamour. Even then, his only acknowledgment of it was to open the door, chat and laugh a little with the assailants, and finally send them about their business—like lambs. That same night, when all was quiet, a hulking rowdy might have been seen leaving Wellclose Square with a bandaged hand, and in company with a very young and delicate-looking man, who, after seeing his big friend safely off the local beat, applied his latch-key to the Mission House door, and retired to a dearly-earned rest.

CHAPTER XV

“WHAT MANNER OF MAN IS THIS?”

“He ceased, then slowly raised his hands,
The people bowed the knee;
He looked on all around, and said,
‘The Lord look down on thee!’”

THE resurrection of Lizzie Meek does not represent the one and only supernatural event which occurred during Mr. Lyne's arduous Mission labours in Wellclose Square. One night he was summoned to the bedside of a young woman who was dying in one of the miserable residences situated in the foot-passage before mentioned, which lay between the Square enclosure and Ratcliff Highway. It was very late when, his duties being ended, he prepared to turn homewards—the matter of a few steps. He had comforted and prepared a passing soul for its flight across Jordan, and his thoughts were still filled and chastened with the echoes of the scene he had just quitted, when he became aware of the discordant clash of voices, laughter, and what passed for music, near at hand. Looking up, he realised that these sounds proceeded from a low dance-saloon—about the worst den of the neighbourhood—and from the babel that assailed him of song and drunken revelry, he knew only too well that one of those nameless orgies against which both he and his fellow-workers had directed their heaviest battering-rams of eloquence and authority was in process of fermentation.

Quick as thought he crossed the narrow alley, and presented himself at the door of the entertainment. “Can I come in?” he asked politely of the Cerberus in office, who eyed his distinctive cassock and biretta with a look of

profound stupefaction. "Well, of course you *can*, sir, if you choose," was this individual's answer; "but I wouldn't, if I was you." Disregarding this friendly hint, Mr. Lyne took his way up the crazy passage into the still crazier atmosphere of the saloon beyond. It was a strange and weird scene, this glimpse of degenerate bacchanalia of the lowest type. In a bare and dirty room, the air of which was foul with smoke, spirits, and unwashed humanity, about thirty couples, or more, were jigging round in one another's arms, to the strains of an accompaniment which defied the measures of time and rhythm as relentlessly as did the dancers themselves. Some of the company, in different phases of inebriation, were huddled on wooden benches, and applauded the antics of their more agile comrades; while others, more helplessly overcome with the stifling temperature or their own potations, looked on without any apparent interest in the proceedings. Poor dead Zola would have loved the penning of such a picture, but he could scarcely have conceived the transformation which replaced it.

"We must all appear before the Judgment Seat of Christ," said a clear, ringing voice in the doorway, and at the words both music and dance ceased as if by magic. The laughter died out, and the hubbub of busy tongues subsided into a terrified silence. If the Trump of the Archangel had sounded, the effect could hardly have been more prodigious. All eyes were on the speaker, and one by one those present, young or old in years and sin, drew, pale and trembling, towards the slight, black-robed figure, which stood unarmed and alone, like a prophet in their midst. Breathlessly they waited till he should speak again; but the Message was already given, and after blessing the poor, tawdry, self-forgetting souls before him, and giving them a few tenderly-worded leaflets, Mr. Lyne left the scene as quietly as he had entered it. There was no more dance or music for any one that night!

Next day, which happened to be a Sunday, a great blessing awaited him. The dying girl whose last moments he had hoped to have made sweet the night before, was

present at the early Mass, *perfectly cured*. She and her mother both approached the Holy Table to make their Communion of Thanksgiving—a sight which gave Mr. Lyne a severe shock, for when he had left the patient soon after midnight, she was to all appearance *in extremis*, and he not unnaturally concluded that she must long since have passed away. No sooner was the Mass said than mother and daughter hurried to him with their wonderful story. I give it in the mother's words. "You had not left the house five minutes, sir, before my child said, 'Oh, mother, I see the Lord Jesus coming to me, and He has two beautiful angels with Him, one on either side! He is making me well again—quite, quite well.' I thought these were her last words, for *I* could see nothing; but she was right! The Lord *did* cure her that very instant, and you can see for yourself if what we say is true." The girl herself gave similar testimony, only with more detail; but the most convincing witness of the three was the fact that she was alive and present before them all, in the best of health and spirits. This phenomenal recovery was not brought about either by contact with a sacred relic or by the laying on of hands. The Reverend Father assures me that he merely prayed with the girl and commended her soul to God as it was about to pass.

If many overpowering blessings and privileges attended Mr. Lyne's ministry amongst the poor and godless, it must not be imagined that he had no disappointments. Here is one, for instance, which, although its comic touches are many, caused him a good deal of real personal pain.

Amongst the local celebrities in the St. George's radius was a certain Mary Long, a young and particularly muscular Irish woman (originally a Roman Catholic), in whom Mr. Lyne took great interest. Mary was a good soul on the whole, but she had one terrible failing—she could not resist the fascination of a glass too much. She might flee the Tempter nine times, but the tenth he would do for her altogether; and in these seasons of misrule poor Mary was certain to make a public exhibition of herself in

the streets. She did not become helpless, but simply hilarious, to an extent which sometimes meets its reward in a gratuitous night's lodging at His Majesty's expense. Mr. Lyne had great influence over poor Mary. She loved to hear him preach, and to the best of her ability strove to do honour to the kindly sympathy he evinced for her, with all the fervour of her grateful Irish heart. But the dreadful drink was too often paramount, and Mr. Lyne was at last fain to acknowledge she was a failure. This was the finale of her conversion.

One early evening—and just at a time, too, when it was hoped that God's grace had really saved her from herself—Mr. Lyne was attracted to the window by a rush of feet and peals of derisive laughter. These sounds came from the north side of the Square leading into the main thoroughfare, and there was no need to seek far to learn their cause.

With her arms waving like semaphores and bared above the elbow, her bonnet hanging round her neck, and dancing and singing with all her might, down into the Square came Miss Mary Long, followed by hundreds of supporters—for the most part boys—who were jeering, pelting, and hooting, as a chorus to her patriotic songs and dialogues. She was half mad with drink, and the less choice her vocabulary became, the more her tormentors yelled and jubilated. It is never safe to irritate an inebriate, especially one of such exuberant physique as our present heroine happened to be, and it was a spectacle which would have delighted a Roman amphitheatre, to see the havoc done on all sides by her gladiatorial fists. Striking out royally to right and left, she made a truly triumphant progress, her assailants falling under her rain of blows like so many ninepins—or withered leaves. Poor Mary's temper had long since reached boiling-point, and there is no saying to what pugilistic extremities she might have been driven, had not Mr. Lyne quietly stepped in and closed the situation. "Put your sleeves down at once, Mary, and your bonnet on your head, and come with me."

This was all he said, but the effect of his words was instantaneous. The crowd dispersed in all directions, some flying for their lives, and others slinking off in a half-sullen, shamefaced way, while Mary herself, decently covering her substantial biceps, and adjusting her bonnet (hind part before), meekly followed her champion into the precincts of the long-suffering Mission House. "You're the last one, Father Lynes, as I'd 'ave 'ad see me," was her tearful apology as they reached their destination.

Once safely arrived, Mr. Lyne led his penitent into the oratory, and there, at the foot of the Crucifix, he held up the mirror to her soul. He showed her all the beauty and peace of the paths she had abandoned for the wilderness of self-indulgence and self-degradation—from which, however, through the infinite mercy of the God of Love, it is never too late to turn back. We all know our Reverend Father's powers of exhortation, and Mary Long knew them also; but at that moment her mind was scarcely in a condition to absorb impression, "even though one rose from the dead."

Feeling the wisdom of postponing his admonitions till the reaction which inevitably follows drunken exhilaration had fairly set in, Mr. Lyne decided to leave the poor soul a while, to the company of her own conscience, and the thoughts which he hoped the solitude of the quiet little chapel might suggest. "I shall come back to you in an hour, Mary," he said kindly, "and by that time I am sure you will have realised how deeply you have grieved our Blessed Lord."

Her term of probation ended, and full of hope that a wandering sheep was about to be gathered for good and all into the Heavenly Fold, Mr. Lyne softly re-entered the oratory, and had the satisfaction of finding the object of his prayers on her knees before the Crucifix. This sight filled him with a passion of joy and thanksgiving, but unfortunately it was destined to be short-lived. No sooner did Mary Long become aware of his presence, than, stretching out both her arms to the Supreme Emblem of

Redemption, she exclaimed, with all the breadth and fervour of her country's brogue, "Jesus, Mary, and Joseph, have mercy on me, but I *won't* give up my drink!"

The shock and disappointment which this miserable perversity occasioned may be better imagined than described, but Mr. Lyne nevertheless possessed his soul in patience. His most immediate dilemma was to know what best to do with his poor refractory penitent. In her present state of semi-intoxication he had not the heart to turn her into the street, yet keep her longer in the Mission House he could not. Night was coming on, and the situation threatened difficulty. Then all at once the recollection of the excellent schoolmistress came across him, and forthwith, to the sympathetic "Biss Kitched" (whose "h'excelle't soup" was even at that moment fresh in his nostrils) he carried his troubles—and his ward. Between them, Mary Long, then in a state of maudlin lethargy, was bestowed *pro tem.* in the Infant School—a large room situated on the first floor of the house. An hour or so later, when these "guardians" went to visit their charge, with the intention of sending her quietly home, they found an open window and a bird that had flown. Poor Miss Kitchen's summary of the case was characteristic and unique. "Ho! Bister Lyde," she exclaimed, white as ashes, "whatever shall we do dow? Bary Log bust 'ave jupped h'out." And the deduction was the only logical one. Not a trace of the missing lady was to be found. She had evidently become tired of solitude and, enclosure, and being naturally active and agile, she jumped it.

This incident caused Mr. Lyne a good deal of worry; and his fellow-workers, though they sympathised with him sincerely, were not blind to the comic side of the proceedings. Thus it happened that more than one little side-wind of good-humoured chaff blew his way whenever the name of Mary Long was mentioned, or the mystery of her moonlight flitting revived.

One very important monument in this biography was

erected during the East End interlude—nothing less than the Reverend Father's first visits to Llanthony and Belmont, the latter a large Roman Catholic Benedictine Monastery, from which he received the Rule of its saintly Founder, whose Ancient British Congregation he has since revived. It was while staying for a brief holiday at Clehonger with the Vicar (the Reverend H. Stillingfleet), one of his old Worcester friends, that these memorable excursions were made, but at the time their significance was scarcely appreciated by those who accompanied him. From the moment that Mr. Lyne set eyes on the beautiful old ruins of Llanthony Priory, they appealed to him strangely, and a desire which was almost a prayer took possession of his heart, in the shape of a day-dream of the revival of a lapsed privilege in his beloved National Church. To restore that Priory, and people it with devout Monks, was henceforth to be the preoccupation of his meditative moments, and with these fantastic images there mingled also the hazy outlines of the man who had left all the state and grandeur of the noblest house in Spain, to go forth an outcast beggar, and die, the Father of an immortal line of sons. This train of thought was an enthralling one, all the more so because it teemed with impossibilities. Time was not yet ripe, and the platitudes of present circumstances were many and pressing; yet, for all that, a kind of Vision Beautiful had dawned upon the enthusiast, and for the future it was to be the clasped hands of Benedict and Loyola that were to draw him towards the Light.

He returned to his Mission labours with renewed strength and zeal, but with an undercurrent of ambition which had hitherto been undefined. The mantle of his heroic prototype had already brought its inspirations, and the craving to be up and doing was becoming intolerable. There is an amusing incident connected with one of the "revivals of pious customs" which Mr. Lyne took special pleasure in developing amongst his flock. He determined to organise a pilgrimage to St. Edward's shrine in West-

minster Abbey, and the plan finding favour in the eyes of his *entourage*, the expedition was both planned and carried out.

About thirty souls, including choir, parish workers, and some "elect" but miscellaneous folk, set out in the local steamer to visit the resting-place of the Confessor-King. The transit was a cheap and pleasant one, covering the comparatively short distance between the London Docks and Westminster Bridge. At this latter point of debarkation, the pilgrims, headed by Mr. Lyne (in his cassock, scapular, and clerical hat), duly alighted, and proceeded to the Abbey Church. Two cross-grained, or possibly super-Protestant, vergers happened to be on duty at the time, and they eyed the new-comers with open disfavour. Upon the party reaching the royal shrine, and kneeling in obedience to Mr. Lyne's suggestion that they should offer up an appropriate prayer, these outraged potentates "came down" upon them in Byronic-Assyrian style, and informed them laconically that "no praying was allowed except during Divine service." One of them added the personal appendix of an autocratic invitation to "get h'up," levelled at the meekest-looking member of the pilgrimage; but this aside being overheard by Mr. Lyne, it was quickly followed by the peremptory countermandate, "Do no such thing. This is the house of God and the house of prayer too," he added, turning to the Bumble-like individual who had last spoken. "We are disturbing no one, and harming nothing, so we shall pray as much as we like." "No, yer won't," was the courteous reply; "get h'up, h'all of yer, and clear h'out!"

This was too much for Mr. Lyne's sense of justice. "You can put me out by force if you choose," he said warmly, "but if you do, I shall report you to the Dean." The men's only comment was to lay hands upon him and land him outside the door, where he was soon surrounded by his discomfited and alarmed fellow-pilgrims. On returning to the Mission House, Mr. Lyne's first care was to write his grievance to the Dean. In reply, this dignitary

sent him a most kind and courteous letter, not only expressing his surprise and regret at what had taken place, but offering a personal "pass" at any and all times that "Mr. Lyne and his pilgrims might see fit to revisit the scene of their unlucky adventure."

This repetition, however, did not take place. Mr. Lyne's stay in the East End was not destined to be a long one, and its term was already drawing to a close. It was the wearing of the Benedictine habit, and the commentary awakened by this step, which severed his connection with the St. Saviour's Mission Church. For those left behind, to the discretion of the next comer, the break-up was indeed to be lamented, and the grief it occasioned universal. The ministry of the young Deacon had been a remarkable one, and its fruits were manifold. From the very first he had made it his business to arrive at personal contact with every soul, however humble, under his charge. There was no vile slum, no filthy cellar within his knowledge, which he had not visited and sought to brighten with his comfortable words of pardon and peace. Where no priest or police officer dared to go, he went at all times, and alone. He showed no fear, and felt none, and this very quality gave him a passport that all the official seals and parchments in the world could not have produced.

As a mark of God's special protection, too, he passed unharmed through all the acute occasions for physical infection which are inseparable from house-to-house visitations amongst the really poverty-stricken and degraded derelicts of the human race. On one occasion, he remembers kneeling between two men dying in the same bed, the one stricken with typhus, the other with scarlet fever, and commending their passing souls in an atmosphere whose density and stench passed all description. But there were also times when Mr. Lyne could assume the authority of his calling, and mete out retributive justice unsparingly, even if the offender happened to be a woman. For instance, it came to his knowledge one day that a certain person had cruelly slandered her neighbour, and for this

cause he forbade her to enter the church until due reparation had been made. The lady, however, proved obdurate, and presented herself at service as though nothing had happened, whereupon Mr. Lyne closed his book, denounced her publicly, and declined to proceed until she had withdrawn. In a subsequent conversation, the woman informed him that "she didn't care! There were plenty of churches besides St. Saviour's, and she could go to the Swedes' Chapel if she chose." Mr. Lyne's answer was an uncompromising one—"No matter what church you go into in your present state, depend upon it the Devil will get you out of it again sooner than you think."

A few days later this very same party called at the Mission House and asked for "Father Lynes." "If you please, sir," she said humbly, "I've come to say I'll do anything you tell me. I've been to the chapel, and the Devil *did* drive me out. I had only just got in, when a dreadful feeling took me, and I had to go!" This incident ended by "Father Lynes" relenting so far that he allowed the repentant lady to re-enter his flock, but not until she had made public confession of her sin, by reading from the chancel step a statement whereby the injured neighbour was fully reinstated in the esteem of the entire congregation.

The personal Saturday-night raids made by Mr. Lyne on the reeking gin-palaces of the neighbourhood are also details which his East End converts are not likely to forget. They were perfect games of hide and seek. As he entered at one door, he would be sure to see a few of his "hopefuls" creeping out at another. They would invent all sorts of feints and subterfuges not to be caught red-handed, for that meant to have their names held up to public reproach in church on the morrow, and yet they loved their "Father Lynes" too well to stay away from his services, and thus evade exposure.

No leave-takings were ever more pathetic than those which separated Father Lowder's young Deacon from his poor Whitechapel friends; but the end had to come. The

assumption of the Benedictine habit by a clergyman of the English Church was an innovation which the patrons of the Mission were not inclined to forgive. The most wealthy amongst them threatened to withdraw their support, and in the face of this financial famine Father Lowder entreated his friend to reconsider the wisdom of laying aside the disputed garb. "Do let me beg of you to do so, Mr. Lyne," said the good Priest earnestly. "Here are all these people saying they will never give a penny more to the Mission unless you respect their objections. What answer am I to give them?"

Mr. Lyne silently took up his scapular, and with both hands measured the space of an inch upon its hem. "Tell your patrons," he said slowly, "that I will not yield *that* much of *this*," and he reverently pointed to the sombre black serge and the measured modicum that lay between his thumbs. "But I will do something else," he added, suddenly cheering up, "something that will help you out of your difficulty quite as well, and even better—I will leave!"

There has been so much parrot talk as to the real motive which could have produced this strange tenacity to wear a religious uniform, which obviously could not fail to be repudiated alike by National Church and State, that I cannot do better than quote the Reverend Father's own words (gathered from a sheaf of printed sermons) on this vexed and much-discussed question.

"I felt *called* to come before the world as a Monk," he says, "and I knew I should be exposed to the chaff and ridicule of a world opposed to Monks. I knew I should cut myself adrift from my friends. I knew that I should have to suffer every indignity, and perhaps martyrdom." Then he goes on to paint the result of this self-imposed sacrifice. "I have been pelted with mud and rotten eggs, hooted and jeered by a yelling mob, spit upon, and often in fear of my life; yet, for all that, I wear my Monk's dress still."

CHAPTER XVI

“CONSECRATED FOR EVERMORE”

“O Lord, with my whole heart,
I'll bow before Thy Shrine,
And consecrate my life to Thee,
Sweet Jesus, Saviour mine.”

WHEN Mr. Lyne informed Father Lowder of his intention to leave his Mission, that worthy Priest's answer was in itself expressive of something beyond ordinary regret—"Pray don't let the people know you are going!" This strange request was scrupulously respected, and it was not really until the very eve of his departure that the congregation knew they were to lose their "Father Lynes," as he was somehow generally called. It was during his last sermon that this impression gradually overcame his hearers, and on leaving St. Saviour's Church at its close, he found crowds awaiting him, many of them weeping bitterly, and one and all pressing round for a parting shake of the hand or blessing. Such scenes are not easily forgotten, especially when the actors are the poor and ignorant, or those among whom the admonitory fire and sword of the Divine Spirit have perforce had to be carried, as well as its milk and honey of consolation. The assembly of souls gathered that night in Wellclose Square was indeed a remarkable one, from the heterogeneous standpoint. Good, bad, and indifferent, with one accord forgot their petty party spirit, and joined heart and hand in the common fellowship of grief, at the passing from their midst of the man who had spared neither wine nor oil in the healing of their wounds, neither time nor labour in the lighting up of their dark ways. Their good Samaritan was going hence to be

no more seen, and in the rough sincerity of their gratitude they swarmed to bid him God-speed, and offer the only tribute which is within reach of all, rich and poor alike—their tears.

And thus once again a silver thread was loosed, a bowl broken, on the great highway. Thus also that our Reverend Father entered on the first real chapter of his life monastic—the life *apart*, which for the last forty years, and to this day, he has led with the same devotion and uncompromising conviction that upheld his headlong plunge into its deep waters on the memorable Shrove Tuesday of the year 1862.

When the strings of the fashionable money-bags began to show signs of closing against the innovation of St. Benedict's habit, and Father Lowder to take up an expostulatory line of parable, Mr. Lyne saw the inevitable result. He was determined to stand his ground, so instead of handling the situation with diplomacy or half-way measures, he stepped over it, by tendering his resignation on the spot. This done, he apprised his parents of the fact, and began to lay the foundations of his dearly-cherished but despairing enterprise—a Monastery. For this end he wrote a short but stirring pamphlet on the revival of the Monk's Life in the Church of England, copies of which he sent to the Anglican clergy, and those of the laity whose Catholic sympathies were likely to be aroused.

The first-fruits of this labour were showers of letters from all corners of the kingdom, and, as might be expected, an epistolary hurricane from his own father. This angry intervention, however, fell short, and much as Mr. Lyne regretted it, he received it as the philosopher does the inevitable—from the large-minded point of view. The very name of Monk was bound to hiss in the ears of Protestantism, and in those days even more than now, the fact of one young and delicate man pretending to fly in the face of Reformed orthodoxy, and rebuild single-handed the ruins of a fallen and accursed Institution, must have

sounded more like the certificate of a criminal lunatic than the manifesto of a sane and sober citizen. Gentle Mrs. Lyne, though her prophetic mother-soul left her no illusions as to the penalties of the life which her child had chosen, gave him all her sympathy; but she was powerless to calm the troubled home-waters, or even to allay their fury.

In the meantime the pamphlet had done its work, and the consummation of the dream was at hand. Two other kindred spirits had taken fire from the launching of the monastic thunderbolt, and were ready to cast in their lot with its promoter. Nor was this all! Amongst the many shadowy inquiries and half-breathed offers of help from sundry clergy, came two substantial propositions to give gratuitous house-room to an Anglican Community, could such be formed within a time-limit, and on condition that the Brothers should share in the parish duties, and, so far as they were canonically fitted, in the church services and schools. These overtures were naturally from the Tractarian side of the Communion, to whom the necessity for religious institutions was a growing preoccupation, only secondary to the restitution of the Sacraments to their primitive dignity, and even as accessory to the same. Of these negotiations, only one proved worth its salt, and the offer of the Rev. George Drury was forthwith accepted. This new-comer on the biographical *tapis* was the Rector of Claydon, Suffolk, a village situated about four miles out of Ipswich. He had been much struck by the originality and logic of Mr. Lyne's appeal for the restoration of the cloister in the National Church, and having an entirely unused wing in his Rectory at his disposal, he invited the wandering Monks to make it their temporary home prior to the opening of a Community House in Ipswich itself—a development towards which Mr. Drury also promised his ready help and interest.

The outlook was hardly brilliant, but it was a stepping-stone into space; and as the vow of holy poverty explains one of the three mysterious knots on the monastic girdle, the nakedness of the land was not to be considered, beyond

where the possibility of knitting soul to body might be considered.

So, in the teeth of Church and State, the hospitality of the Suffolk Rectory was duly accepted—on the counterpoise conditions before mentioned. For a furnished lodging, which they might dispute at will with the mice and spiders, and a "board" whose monastic and perpetual feature proved to be a local speciality (or abomination) known as the "Norfolk dumpling," the Brothers, in addition to the observance of their Rule (including its Offices, Fasts, and Vigils) were to give their services in church, schools, and parish ministrations. Mr. Drury, on his side, undertook to fulfil the duties of chaplain to the Community, and to place his church at their service for the recital of their Night and Day Offices. With the exception of the mighty dumpling, whose existence still lay among the shadows of the merciful unknown, the Brothers were only too glad to endorse one and all of the obligations of their new convention. On the Vigil of the Forty Days' Fast, 1862, two of the little company—Brothers Martin and Anselm—arrived upon the scene, to be followed ten days later by the Superior and a third postulant.

It is now both a duty and a diversion to note the first active brush-by of the monastic habit, and the preliminary shudder with which pious Protestantism received the apparition, and the news of its approach. Mr. Lyne's plainly-worded leaflet had prepared his fellow-clergy for the bold step in contemplation, and a waft of rumour had even swept more than once into the Episcopal circle, but inasmuch as the spirit of enterprise and vigilance was not the energising president of the Purple Bench, Goliath the Mitred only laughed in his lawn sleeve to hear that a youth in Israel was about to fling a well-aimed pebble into the very heart of post-Reformation orthodoxy. Could the great one of Gath have foreseen the events of the next forty years at that crucial moment, it is probable that the Monk of Llanthony might have been constrained to cease from troubling, by one of the many unpleasant means

which Protestants affirm that their Jesuit brothers exercise daily for the removal of the superfluous element from their earthly path.

Simultaneously with his descent upon Claydon Rectory, Mr. Lyne assumed his name in religion—that of his soldier-saint and patron, whose footprints he longed so fervently to track and imitate. It is as Brother Ignatius that he is still remembered and blessed in the old familiar Suffolk village. Ignatius of Jesus, O.S.B., Monk and Abbot, is the full length and breadth of the Reverend Father's official title at the present date. While Mr. Drury's guest at the Rectory, he was Brother, not Father, Ignatius, for the latter dignity was only assumed in the following year, when as Superior of his own Monastery he had taken life-vows and become the spiritual Father of the entire revived Order. In the Benedictine Rule the prefix of Brother or Sister is given to the novice, that of Father or Mother to the life-vowed Monk or Nun.

As I purpose giving the reader an approximate programme of the life led daily at Llanthony by its enclosed inmates in the latter part of this volume, I shall not now enlarge upon the peculiarities or details of the Benedictine Code, but merely state as a statistical fact, that no sooner had Brother Ignatius arrived at Claydon, than this Rule was carried out in all its branches. Its Fasts and Silences were scrupulously observed, its Offices duly recited by night and by day, the sound of the Bell directing the sacred routine, like an exalted metamorphosis of man-of-war discipline. Often in the silence of the transition hours—when midnight and dawn wrestle for mastery—the belated revellers and weary sickbed watchers have been awed or cheered by the voice of this solemn summons to praise and intercession, ringing through the lonely stretch of street and sleeping habitation.

Claydon being under the thumb of Ipswich, and in the Norwich Diocese, it was naturally a small but volcanic centre of eruptive Protestantism. Its strong man was the typical Suffolk farmer, and among its lesser lights figured



BROTHER IGNATIUS AT THE AGE OF 25
AT THE BEGINNING OF HIS CAMPAIGN AGAINST WORLD AND CHURCH



the country shopkeeper, the local potentates such as the reigning lawyer, doctor, etc., and a whole swarm of religious professors of different persuasions, but unanimous enough when the "No Popery" contagion was in the air.

It needs no graphic pen-picture to describe the feelings of this sanctimonious little village, when a whole nestful of fully-fledged Monks was suddenly hatched in its midst. The High Church "goings on" at Mr. Drury's church had already for some time afforded scandal a supply of nuts sufficient to fatten a whole army of apes, but this advent of ravening wolves, arrayed, too, in the unblushing hypocrisy of the Popish sheep-skin, was a final straw of which even the most pessimistic had never dreamed. Claydon had foamed itself dry at the vagaries of its parish Priest, but at the sight of the serge and sandals in its respectable streets, it literally followed the example of the fabulous worm—it turned—whatever that enigmatic expression in its most virulent interpretation may happen to imply.

The declaration of open war was nevertheless suspended for a while, it being the opinion of the authorities that this bubble of monasticism was destined to a speedy and inglorious dissolution. The local venom was therefore reserved for a more fitting season—a species of "bottling up" which only increased and embittered its process of fermentation.

At the Rectory, and within its unpretending little cloister, the wheel of events was turning happily enough. From the hour of his first appearance in the Claydon pulpit, Brother Ignatius filled the church as it had never been filled before, and by the end of a single month the Protestant party had the mortification of realising that their village was fast becoming a veritable Mecca for pilgrimages of devotion or curiosity for miles round. Christians and "otherwises," of every class and persuasion, flocked in masses to hear the strange young Ascetic, whose fiery eloquence, rumour told them, caused him to speak "as never yet man spake," and whose peculiar dress and fragile appearance alone made him a target for a volley of gossip and idle speculation.

But it was neither as a professional orator nor a monastic figure-head that the energetic Monk set about his Father's business. He worked as few slaves have worked, both in his Community life and out of it. In short—to use a Biblical metaphor—he turned his small world upside down. One of the chief scenes of his labours was the Rectory barn. This commodious building was his school-room, and here classes were held and lectures given—the needs of both children and adults being equally studied and provided for. The choir was next taken in hand. Under the musicianly instructions of their Brother Superior, the men and boys soon learned to interpret the grand old chants of St. Gregory according to their composer's conception, and to realise their privilege of being singers in the House which is also the Gate of Heaven. The register of communicants also began to show signs of a crowded page. Claydon's population numbered about five hundred souls, and at the time of the Brothers' arrival only a very few were regular guests at the Divine Feast. Before the Monks had been long in residence, this tepid condition was radically changed. Brother Ignatius, in addition to his stirring sermons and school-teachings on this almighty subject, commenced also an organised system of house-to-house visitations, which were greatly blessed in many instances by bringing sheep to the Fold. Over one hundred communicants were added to the scanty lists, several of these entries representing members of Non-conformist sects, who by the Message of Peace delivered by the youthful Evangelist had been drawn irresistibly and gratefully within the shadow of the Church's pale.

And here arose the warcy! The Nonconformist ministers and schoolmasters looked upon their diminished ranks with apprehension, and vowed vengeance on the promoters of the falling off. Then the murmur of approaching thunder began in all directions. First and foremost, the local newspapers scraped their fiddles, then the easy-going parsons chimed in with a feeble refrain, but the big drum of defiance was left to the farmer contingency

—a noble army of martyrs, who, with a wooden-legged rat-catcher as their general, took a solemn oath not to sleep in peace until they had delivered poor Protestant Claydon from the thrall of its Popish Monks.

It was in the February of the year that the installation of the Brothers had taken place, but not until the close of May that the gathering storm burst. When relations are acutely strained, it takes but a puff of wind to snap the tension. The carrying of the banner of Our Lady in solemn procession on Ascension Day seems to have been the crowning offence in the eyes of the opposition. A veritable "No Popery" riot ensued, and from that date forward Brother Ignatius could not show himself outside the Rectory grounds without meeting with a shower of petty insults, and even more substantial missiles, in the shape of mud, rotten eggs, etc. Some of the attempts to annoy him were distinctly splashed with comedy. One old lady, for instance (whose office was to sweep out the Baptist Chapel), in spite of her advanced years, would execute a war-dance as soon as she saw the black habit and hempen girdle coming her way; and so fertile was her inventive genius, that she sometimes varied her ritual by tinkling a small bell in the Monk's face, or beating a tattoo on a tin watering-pot with whatever implement came nearest to hand. These delicate demonstrations, and the familiar "No Popery!" (bawled by those who had not the faintest notion of the meaning of the word), became the everyday accompaniments of the Superior's walks. Sometimes they were supplemented by satirical recommendations to "go and kiss the Pope's toe," and other scraps of gratuitous advice couched in less elegant rhetoric. But "No Popery! We won't have no Popery!" was the topical burden of the song, and gradually but surely this murmur of stray voices swelled into a *sotto voce* but menacing chorus.

The law of compensation is, however, strong, and if Brother Ignatius had many enemies, they were outnumbered by his friends. Even those who, from personal conviction or ignorance, were unable to endorse his Catholicism and

advanced teachings, could but admire and respect the absolute courage with which he professed his opinions, and the powerful eloquence with which he expressed them. Sermonolatry was one of Claydon's besetting weaknesses, and if the uncompromising young Monk pointed boldly to the Sacrifice of the Mass as the concentrated centre of all Christian worship—both in his pulpit and his parochial visitations—the passion of his oratory overcame them like a fiery tide, and they returned again and again to hear the same strange doctrine propounded with a simple grandeur that brought it even within the limited reach of the spiritually halt and maimed and blind. Says one who was present—"It would be difficult to paint the excitement produced by Brother Ignatius's style of preaching. It was something marvellous, and extended far and wide. From Ipswich, and from villages around Claydon, people came in shoals. Not only was every seat full, but persons sat on the tops of the seats, on the window-sills, on the pulpit steps, and even took possession of the chancel right up to the altar steps. A large unseated space in front of the pulpit at the adjunct of the nave and transepts used to be filled with men and boys sitting crosslegged in Turkish fashion."

The Sunday evening service was perhaps the most popular of all, though the early celebrations soon became well attended, and also the midday Masses by non-communicants. This latter innovation was a full-faced slap for Protestantism, but it was the Superior's sermons on the Sunday and Thursday evenings which perhaps dealt it altogether the most fair and square "one in the eye." These discourses were doctrinal instructions in the form of soul-stirring personal exhortations, and the conversions they wrought were marvellous. As a means of holding his flock together and of creating a bond of fellowship between its members, Brother Ignatius set about reviving the Second and Third Orders of the Benedictine Rule. The former of these modifications he hoped to rebuild later on, by the formation of Anglo-Catholic Sisterhoods and Nunneries, but the latter he was able to adapt to immediate

advantage, for (as is generally known) a Third Order is the exclusive privilege of those living in the world; and to be a Tertiary only obliges the living of a Christian life, and the reciting of a few short prayers for the intentions of the congregation.

At Claydon, the Third Order soon became a very neat little army, composed of faithful men and women of all classes and ages; but unfortunately they were singled out to receive the counter-shock of the antagonism which was slowly surrounding their Superior. The farmers were rich, and they spared neither money nor beer in inciting the ignorant mob to worry the hard-working Community. One mighty landowner declared that he would give a thousand pounds to any one who would “clear the whole lot of Monks out of the place,” and the rat-catcher, who was in his pay, gave out publicly that he would “do” for the Superior before he was many days older.

Things began to look ugly. It was now no uncommon thing for ladies to be mobbed and insulted on their way from church or the Tertiary meetings; and tracts were distributed for miles round by the Protestant party, who called Claydon Rectory the Gate of Hell, and anathematised its inmates as delegates from the same dynasty. Some beautiful stained glass was smashed in the church, and the crowd took to battering on the doors, and singing abominable parodies of the Gregorian chants, while their beautiful originals were being rendered at Divine service. Gentlemen in the congregation were fain to see the ladies safely to their homes at night, while, at Mr. Drury’s request, the Monks returned to the Rectory through a side door. One evening a report became current that the Rector had been killed! Mrs. Drury was luckily absent at the time, but the panic was tremendous. The Rectory servants went screaming about the house, ladies fainted or indulged in hysterics, and only when Mr. Drury himself reappeared in apparently good health, did the scare diminish. The rumour, however, had not been altogether without foundation. A miscreant in the crowd had actually aimed a stone at the Priest, but

it had hardly touched him, and he carried home the missile as a monument of his preservation.

Brother Ignatius was forced to set a lighted candle between himself and the window of his bedroom every night after dark, his friend the rat-catcher having amiably sworn to shoot him the first time he saw his shadow on the blind. Stones and bricks were constantly hurled through his window as chance shots, but although two of these almost struck him as he lay in bed, he was mercifully enabled to escape injury.

The London Press had by this time taken the names of Claydon and Brother Ignatius between its teeth. The lordly *Times* put forth a leader on the programme of the Ascension Day services—a distinction which, although set in an uncomplimentary key, naturally inclined the newspaper world in general to chime its big bells.

It would almost seem that at the outset of the Reverend Father's career the public elected to consider him from the zoological point of view, rather than from the human or psychological. "*What* is this Monk Ignatius?" was the question which passed from lip to lip during the early sixties of the last century, and it was the Monk himself who strove to satisfy the current curiosity on this knotty point. He wrote a letter to the *Times*, in which he set forth a simple statement of his cherished scheme, and its intimate connection with the welfare of his beloved Church. This letter also dealt in detail with the Ascension Day ceremonials, and the salutary effect they had produced on countless souls; but for reasons known only to the editorial mind, this explanatory half-column was suppressed. A few days later, however, Brother Ignatius sent its replica to the *Ipswich Journal*, who published it, with a spark-raising result.

It was at this critical moment that the Episcopal Bench gave forth its first groan. Brother Ignatius was invited to an interview of expostulation by his Right Reverend Lordship of Norwich—a fruitless tactic, which resulted in the Monk's inhibition and the placing of Mr. Drury in the

Canonical corner. Brother Ignatius, with all respect but still more determination, declined to profit by the good Bishop's exhortations to abandon his "eccentricities" and "absurd dress," and the Rector was forbidden to allow any other preacher save himself to enter the Claydon pulpit for the space of a year, or till further notice.

Interest as well as significance attaches itself to the following parenthesis. Fifteen years later, this same Bishop cheerfully "swallowed" our Reverend Father, "eccentricities," "absurd dress," and all, and welcomed him as a distinguished Mission-Preacher in his diocese—thereby showing that the times had changed, *but the Monk had not!*

CHAPTER XVII

"BUT A STEP BETWEEN ME AND DEATH"

"Prepare, my soul, to meet thy Judge!
For death is ever near,
That entrance to the Judgment-hall,
Where sinful souls shall fear."

THE power which Brother Ignatius exercised over the Claydon population was no hypothetical question. Out of the five hundred British subjects who furnished the lists of the local census, over four hundred signed a memorial to the Bishop, entreating him to sanction the continuance of their "beautiful and reverent" church services, and to establish the Monk as their Rector's Curate. To this appeal, however, his lordship saw fit to turn a deaf ear. It was a surprise and a shock to him, and he realised the solid grit which lay at the bottom of what he had been pleased to consider the mere froth of youthful sensationalism. This revelation, instead of inclining him towards tact, induced him to adopt coercive measures—a policy which only served to inflame the zeal which he sought to quench, and threw the halo of persecution round the man whom he did not understand, and therefore condemned.

The inhibition was naturally hailed with jubilee by the noble one hundred, who expressed their satisfaction by hiring a mob to process round the village, headed by a drunken man bearing a gorgeous banner, on which was inscribed "Three cheers for the Bishop."

Within the outlawed little Community the greatest equanimity reigned. Brother Ignatius made but a single move, and that was the translation of his sermons from the church to the barn, where, needless to say, they were at-

tended by greater crowds than ever. In taking this bold line, the Superior knew he did not outstep his legal limitations, and as to his enemies, they were fain to digest the unpalatable fact that both their champion and themselves had been walked over. It was an acute situation, which could not pass without a brush, and the Protestant party, determined to seize the initiative at any price, came to the Christian conclusion that their only salvation lay in a radical cure—that of securing the Monk by force and burning him alive before the eyes of his infatuated followers.

To put this amiable scheme into execution, one memorable Thursday night a few elect conspirators managed to collect a quantity of faggots and brushwood, and to store them secretly in a field situated immediately behind the barn itself. At a given signal this pile was to be lighted, the Monk waylaid on his road to the Rectory, and literally thrown living upon the bonfire. The service that evening proved to be an exceptionally crowded and stirring one, and Brother Ignatius had stayed after its conclusion, speaking with one and another who lingered for a parting word, till almost all his friends had betaken themselves home, and he himself was more or less alone and unprotected. Suddenly and without warning, he found himself surrounded by a threatening mob, who, after overpowering the few of his congregation who happened still to be on the spot, laid violent hands upon him and proceeded to drag him bodily from the barn. A scuffle ensued, during which the Monk had time to envisage the situation and his own peril. He saw the blazing fire in the field beyond, the rage and hatred in the faces round him, and he felt that his hour had come. It was the object of the ruffians to make short work of their victim. Their ringleader, a giant both in bulk and, height, seized him by the neck and girdle, and, lifting him as easily as though he had been a fly, bore him in triumph towards the fatal pile.

But the aggressors had reckoned without their host, or at least without one poor old woman, whose pluck and daring made her mistress of the field. This worthy indi-

vidual, who lived in a cottage hard by, was attracted by the noise and turmoil without, and, opening her door to learn their cause, she saw the dreadful sight of her spiritual Father, to whom she was devotedly attached, being dragged to his death by a mob of half-mad and drunken rabble. Quick as thought, and regardless of her own danger, she flew to the rescue. Armed with the only weapon she possessed (a mighty pewter teapot), she made straight for the ringleader, the giant who carried the Monk in his iron grasp. Her attack was so sudden and unexpected, that it was overwhelming. Springing like a cat on to the back of the miscreant, she hit him a fearful blow with the teapot, fair and square on the top of his head. No amount of shaking or struggling in the world could make that game old lady budge an inch, nor all the threats and curses in the vernacular cause her to pause or quail. Swinging her deadly teapot to right and left, she brought it down with the force of a hammer on her enemy's hapless skull. None dared approach within reach of her missile, which she continued to wield with relentless energy, until the triumphant moment when the big bully, himself stunned and bleeding, let go his prey, and rolled half unconscious on the ground.

In the general stupefaction which followed this valiant onslaught, the Monk's friends were able to raise him to his feet and hurry him off between them into the Rectory, where, bolts and bars being duly drawn, all further immediate apprehension was at least postponed. As a matter of fact it was practically dispelled, for the knock on the head suffered by their colossal leader seems (if the chronicles of the times may be credited) to have diffused a decidedly soporific effect among his comrades. At the sight of their captain's discomfiture, the exhilaration of their zeal died down like the bonfire in the adjacent field, which smouldered for want of its human fuel. With more shamefacedness than glory, the crusade dispersed like a bubble, and its recruits retired to their homes with the consoling reflection that they had been ignominiously worsted by an old woman and her teapot.

Meanwhile, the anxiety and mental strain of his daily life, aided by the culminating straw of the Bishop's autocratic attitude, had slowly but surely been sapping the physical resources of which at best Brother Ignatius could boast but a very slender capital. In order to ward off a serious breakdown, his friends, with Mr. Drury at their head, persuaded him to take a short rest; and at the request of the dear old Highland "Granny" (Mrs. Cameron of Lakefield), a visit to Scotland was hastily arranged. In accepting this invitation, the Superior had a double aim in view. To found an Anglican Sisterhood in the midst of his Scottish disciples was one of the Monk's most cherished schemes, and he hailed with truly monastic, as well as personal pleasure, the opportunity thus afforded him of ploughing up the ground on which he hoped one day to scatter the Master's grain.

This Highland pilgrimage, on which the devoted "Granny" constituted herself one of his inseparable companions, was a bold step and a dangerous one; but, except in a few instances, even the apparition of the monkish garb (a thing unheard-of in those days except within the enclosures of Roman Catholic monasteries) was greeted with more amazement than actual hostility, though to the Presbyterian mind it must have been a source of irritation that can only be likened to the application of a spiritual blister. This detail, however, troubled Brother Ignatius not a whit. He passed through the enemy's country as naturally and cheerily as though he were pacing his constitutional in his own quiet cloisters. Friends seemed to rise up on all sides wherever he went, and even the Presbyterian soldiery, with whom he had frequent intercourse, were undismayed by his expressive uniform, and, despite their national horror of all things Catholic, told him more than once that "they only wished he could be their chaplain, though he *did* happen to be a Monk."

At Carr Bridge, Morayshire, the party met with its only really warlike reception from the Free Kirk. On arriving, Brother Ignatius announced his intention of

preaching in the parish, and as an additional means of making the fact known, he himself distributed one of his own tracts—a few simple words stating that Christ had died for *all*, and bidding *all* come unto Him. At the moment it quite escaped his memory that this doctrine was in direct opposition to the creed taught by the local ministers, therefore he was unprepared for what was to come. If this unlucky leaflet had been composed of lyddite instead of ink and paper, the detonation it produced amongst the preachers of a qualified Redemption (limited only to the elect and chosen souls set apart for this privilege) could scarcely have been louder. Brother Ignatius was denounced from the pulpits as a heretic, and a liar of the deepest dye. The whole neighbourhood rose up like a den full of wild beasts, and, headed by the ministers and Nonconformist leaders, a veritable boycotting ensued. On the morning of the Sabbath (a day supposed to be set aside for peace and rest), or, to be more precise, at midday, when the congregations had just filed out from Divine service, the following “notice” was pushed under the Monk’s door. I reproduce it in its pristine and original form, for it contains flowers of rhetoric too precious to escape immortality. Note style and punctuation!

“WARNING TO THE JESUIT PRIEST.

“As thy Tribe was always a pestilence to the World. We warn you to forbear Spreading thy eroneous Doctrine in this parsh lest you get a broken head for as you acted against the law, you need not expect ’is protection So forbear to pray or Preach in this Parsh if not the ill be on your own head.”

Close upon the heels of this gentle greeting came a formal notice to quit then and there from the landlady in whose house the Monk and his party were lodging, and here the difficulty threatened to become serious. It was Sunday, and Mrs. Cameron being anything but a young

woman, it was no easy matter to find her another shelter, especially as the ministers had forbidden their entire flocks to allow the intruders to cross their thresholds, on pain of summary and dire consequences to their persons and professions. In his anxiety for Mrs. Cameron's comfort and safety, Brother Ignatius wrote a temperate protest to the leading minister, and desired the landlady to have it taken to him at once. But here a new obstacle arose. It was the "Sawbbath," retorted that pious matron, and she could not break it by carrying letters. Even if she *did* consent to commit such a sin, she added, the minister would not defile his fingers by breaking the seal. Thereupon the indignant "Granny" interposed. "Give *me* the letter, Brother Ignatius," she said, taking possession of it. "Surely if the minister sees an old lady bring it, he will not refuse to receive and answer it."

I regret to add that Mrs. Cameron's forecast of that gentleman's chivalry was of too flattering a nature. Her white hairs did not protect her from an insolent reception at his hands. He told her that Brother Ignatius was a heretic and a liar, and that he should not contaminate himself by communicating with him. As to their difficulty about a lodging, it was their own fault for getting into honest people's houses on false pretences; and a good deal more letting-off of steam in a similar strain.

There was no help for it, go they must. A reprieve till the following morning was all they could obtain from the outraged landlady, and an open car being finally hired, they set out for a twenty miles' drive in the soaking rain to Kingussie, the nearest spot where Mrs. Cameron—who knew the itinerary of the route from end to end—thought they were likely to meet with a more tolerant reception. The only person who seems to have regretted their departure from Carr Bridge was the little lodging-house servant, who, on hearing the Monk and his party abused on all sides, was heard to remark that "whatever they were, they kept every day better than *we* do our Sawbbath."

At Kingussie a very different atmosphere awaited the travellers. Here the reception of the Monk was everywhere most cordial, and the spirit of bigotry and narrow-mindedness so obtrusively displayed in their last resting-place conspicuous only by its absence. The Vesper service of the Scottish Episcopal Church was said daily at Kingussie, before a congregation which included Roman Catholics and Presbyterians, as well as its own legitimate members. Holy Communion was celebrated as frequently as circumstances permitted—a clergyman sometimes coming a hundred and fifty miles to officiate. The local Roman priest was a Highland chief, who had an enormous area of "stations" under his charge, and used at stated intervals to say Mass before an altar which was nothing but a board surmounted by two old candlesticks, and a clumsy china Crucifix, such as may be nowadays seen in a cottage or curiosity shop.

Yet notwithstanding the poverty of the surroundings, and the primitive simplicity with which the congregation would cheerfully clamber up a rickety ladder to assist at the celebration of the Divine Sacrifice, the religious climate of far-away Kingussie was warm with spiritual sympathy and suggestion, and its genial influence, added to the magic of the bracing Highland air, achieved wonders in building up the weary nerves and energies of the overworked young Monk. Most of his time was passed in the house of some excellent Roman Catholic people, who lived four miles out of the town, and with whom he and his friends lodged for the sake of the quiet and seclusion of rural surroundings. Mr. Macdonald, though a steadfast Papist, was a large-minded Christian as well—a blessed quality which has gained him an historical corner in Ecclesiastical statistics, inasmuch as it was he who volunteered as Cross-bearer in the first procession in the Scottish Episcopal Church, where the Blessed Sacrament was carried solemnly forth for the adoration of the faithful. The cathedral in which this significant procession took place was one of Nature's architecture, a country garden, with trees for pillars, the

sky for roof, and a choir of little birds to sing the antiphons. It was Holy Cross Day, 1862, and the Rev. George Akers, a friend of the Monk's from Aberdeen, was the celebrant. The service was said in the "best parlour" of Mr. Macdonald's house, and with lights and flowers the chalice containing the Sacred Elements was borne slowly round the garden, Mr. Macdonald heading the procession with a standard Cross of mountain heather. This is a homely but refreshing glimpse of a spirit of Christian affinity too often absent from our midst, and it is something more besides. Not only does it show that souls under different banners can meet as brothers under the one Supreme Standard, but it underlines the glorious fact that even with primitive surroundings, and where only one or two are gathered together, a page in the Church's Diary may be irrevocably turned down.

Holiday-time is traditionally known to fly by on wings, and the weeks fled quickly towards the date which was to find Brother Ignatius back at his post at the Claydon wheel. It was as a giant refreshed—a giant of energy, if not of strength—that he returned to his labours in the turbulent little Suffolk village, and to find that time had been busy in his absence, bringing in the horizon of change or dissolution in his newly-established Community. The Rector was a married man, and with the prospect of an increasing family the wing of the house occupied by the Brothers would have to be transformed into nursery quarters.

It was tantamount to a notice to quit, and the anxiety which this news brought upon the long-suffering Superior was very heavy, though not exactly unexpected. The hospitality of the Rectory had only been offered him as a temporary arrangement pending others more definite or advantageous, but the present dilemma was his empty purse, and the resources within touch for replenishing it. There were only two alternatives to be entertained—the pulverising of the whole monastic scheme, or the collection of funds sufficient for its permanent establishment on an

independent and self-supporting basis. Of these opposite poles, Brother Ignatius ignored the first and gripped the latter, though he did so in the dark, and without the faintest notion of the direction from whence the financial wherewithal was to be forthcoming. The problem was consigned to prayer and meditation as the initial measure towards its solution, and as Mr. Drury had courteously worded his notification with an elastic time-limit, the Community had leisure to look round, before taking any final decision as to their future destination.

The news of the probable "passing" of the Monks from Claydon was productive of a whirlwind of conflicting sentiment, but it is no exaggeration to say that the outcry of consternation and regret was almost unanimous. The Protestant contingent alone found pleasure in the thought that the Rectory would be rid of its black-robed visitors, but even their satisfaction was tempered by the thought that the Community was not likely to establish itself very far from its present centre. Neither the process of time nor the recollection of the teapot episode had diminished, even if it had pulled out the crest feathers from the malice and all uncharitableness of that small but venomous brigade. Although prudence pointed to the expediency of abstaining from public ebullitions, yet they bit the nails of their hatred with as good an appetite as ever, in the bosoms of their own families. Brother Ignatius was still the target for every species of annoyance and insult imaginable, not only in Claydon itself, but as far afield as Ipswich and the villages beyond.

Had it not been, on one occasion, for the kindness of a lady, there is little doubt but that the Superior would have been stoned to death in the public street. Walking one day through Ipswich, he was attacked by a mob, who commenced hooting and pelting him with every missile that came to hand. One heavy brick hit him on the spine, and with the pain of the blow he turned faint and dizzy, thus exposing himself more than ever to the cowardly fury of his assailants. But Providence is at all times the most

expert of stage managers. The scene of this disgraceful outrage happened to include the doorstep of a certain Miss Mayhew—a faithful member of the Claydon congregation, and also a charitable and gentle lady—who, on hearing the noise beneath her windows, looked out, and saw the defenceless Monk and his tormentors on her threshold. In an instant she was at his side, and, regardless of the sneers and gibes of those around, she had assisted him fearlessly to enter her house, and placed at his disposal the very best that her hospitality could offer.

A glass of wine and an hour's rest enabled Brother Ignatius to return to Claydon, though the walk was a painful one, and, strange to say, not so much as a child looked at him askance as he wended his way home that day. It is almost a metaphysical mystery—the effect which one woman's silent intervention will work on a sordid crowd. Not a whole squadron of mounted constables can disseminate the same amount of challenge, the same concentration of withering yet unspoken reprimand, which God sees fit sometimes to put into a woman's eyes.

It is almost incredible—nowadays more than ever, when the spirit of tolerance flies pretty freely abroad—for the average outsider to realise how far and in what petty detail these Claydon Protestants carried out their miserable little strategies. Here, for instance, is an extract from the *Ipswich Journal* of the time, which will illuminate at least one of these ignoble mosquito stings. Says “Scholasticus” in these local columns—

“Will it be believed that the following occurrence happened in this age of civilisation and under the immediate direction of the Rural Dean? ✠ Ignatius O.S.B., of now more than Claydon notoriety, determined to give himself and a few young friends an afternoon's recreation, for which purpose they strayed to a village not a hundred miles from Coddendam. They first directed their attention to the fine old church, built probably (from its internal evidence) by the Monks, but to this they were denied admittance by

the special order of the Rector, who had espied them and guessed their intentions. Thus disappointed, they proceeded to the village, in which a party of mechanics were engaged in building a house. Here the usual application was made to the rather *unusually* dressed stranger, to lay a brick, to which he assented, but not so to the further very customary request that he would "wet" it (give them a drink all round). To do so, he assured them would be against the rules of his Order, but he prayed for a blessing on the house, and the men were satisfied. . . . Now, can it be believed that the Protestant Rector of the parish, so soon as he heard what had been done by the poor Monk (albeit a Deacon of the English Church), gave orders that the identical accursed brick that he had laid should be taken out, although three or four courses of brickwork had to be removed for the purpose. Whether he afterwards exorcised the brick I do not know. . . . These facts are from undoubted sources."

The above letter merits reproduction if only as a chart of the local pulse. Its writer, however, was evidently unaware that in consequence of the indignant outcry raised in the village by this piece of absurd tyranny, the Rector was forced to suffer the replacement of the disputed bit of masonry. It might please "Scholasticus" to know that this brick is still to be seen in the outer wall of that very house, and further, that some unknown hand has marked it—whether from devotion or busy-bodyism it matters little—with the appropriate sign of our salvation.

I have now endeavoured to give my readers a whiff of the approximate atmosphere of pettifogging persecution by which at the age of twenty-five our Reverend Father found himself surrounded. I leave it to the mothers amongst my readers to realise the agonising anxiety which this prolonged sequence of suspense and impending peril must have caused the one gentle onlooker, who through all these chances and changes in her child's life never added a feather's weight to his burden by so much as a discouraging look or a single personal appeal. "Never mind, my

darling," were the words with which she invariably lighted up his dark moments. "God will give you your own Monastery and Monks some day."

The unselfish heroism of this *mater dolorosa* is in itself a melody of reflection which only the tribute of Silence can set in its appropriate and angelic key.

CHAPTER XVIII

"THOU SPEAKEST SOMETIMES IN VISIONS"

"O Sacred Feast of Jesus' Love!
O Sacrifice Divine!
Clothed in the simple Elements
Of Sacred Bread and Wine."

THE first result of Mr. Drury's announcement to the Community that circumstances obliged him to send them adrift, was a volley of letters for Brother Ignatius from all parts of England, and full of advice or suggestions as impracticable as they were well meant. Even the most moderate of his friends urged him to postpone the furtherance of his monastic enterprise until such time as he should have received Priest's Orders, and thereby be in a more advantageous position. The generality of his well-wishers entreated him to abandon it altogether, make his peace with the Bishop, and retire into some comfortable curacy. Even his father showed signs of relenting at this crisis in his affairs, and trusted to the desperate circumstances of the situation to sicken him for good and all of his fanatical peculiarities. It was a very fatherly and even eloquent letter that Mr. Lyne sent his son on the subject. He offered him complete reconciliation, a winter in Italy to recruit his health, and to aid him later on to find a suitable curacy in which he could settle down like a sensible man, etc. etc. Strange to say, this epistle was received in such a moment of physical and mental prostration, that the Monk felt sorely tempted to what is vulgarly called "cave in." His health was wretched, his purse empty, and not a soul on earth seemed inclined to do aught but depress and discourage him. He felt the absurdity of trying to build

with shadows, when the substance was so glaringly absent, and this very sense of impotency galled him to the quick.

The reaction was happily but short-lived, and his natural energy, added to the conviction that God would be with him, soon brought him back to the surface. His letter to his father was a negative one, but it bore no touch of the white feather. "He would make no decision until he felt he knew God's will concerning him, and for this revelation he would offer special prayer." In the meantime, he expressed his grateful appreciation of his father's kind offer, and his readiness to accept it, should he be so directed—but not otherwise.

This done, Brother Ignatius commenced a solemn season of prayer, for the purpose of soliciting light and guidance for his future career. Above all, he entreated that some definite sign or response might be vouchsafed him, so that he might *know*, and not only *surmise*, the Divine Interposition in what must inevitably be the crucial turning-point of his spiritual life. And his prayer was answered! Before the completion of many days' probation, an event occurred which swept away the last grain of doubt as to the absolute validity of his direct and personal summons to the highest life that can be lived on earth. This manifestation took place one morning early, during the celebration of the daily Mass. Just as the Consecration was proceeding, and Mr. Drury had elevated the Sacred Host—a rite which he always performed with impressive solemnity—Brother Ignatius became aware of the sudden transfiguration of the Sacramental Element. In place of the typical wafer disc, the hand of the celebrant held a living ball of light, a globe of fire. It was the Vision of a few seconds, but even in that breathless space the Monk saw a single ray of glory leap out of the resplendent orb, flash like a meteor across the silent sanctuary, and bury itself finally in his own troubled heart.

There was no physical shock, as the Divine shaft pierced his being, not the shadow of a human pang or sensation, but he knew that in that fleeting instant, that one touch of

the Radiance before which even the angels stand veiled, the third great Message of his life had been spoken, and the greatest of all three, since it had reached him through the almighty medium of the Supreme Sacrifice.

The Message of the old Bells that had comforted and soothed his childish sorrows, the whisper of hope borne to his sickbed at Plymouth but a few years since—they had both been tokens of a Love ineffable, the Love which passeth understanding—but what might this mean, this new glimpse of the Unseen? Only one interpretation seemed possible. It was the consummation of a great progressive privilege, the last syllable of the Master's command to leave all and follow Him. And from that moment Brother Ignatius prayed no more prayers for the light of choice. A Greater than he had laid His finger on the balance, and now it only remained for him to seek the strength necessary for the offering up of his life-service.

It was difficult for outsiders, however devoted, to follow the sanguine forecast with which the Monk now shadowed his future plans, and even he himself saw the necessity of curbing the emotional side of his spirit, that it might not outstep the more mundane considerations inseparable from all solid enterprises. The financial outlook was still a matter of grave perplexity, and a capital of at least £300 was needed before any Community House, even of the most modest pretensions, could be floated. The Brothers were to leave Claydon at Christmas, therefore it was none too soon to push forward their efforts towards some definite settlement. To his father, Brother Ignatius wrote a very gentle but decisive ultimatum. "He now *knew*," said he, "that it was God's will he should leave no stone unturned in the carrying out of his original plan, but that to start his Monastery he must have £300 in hand, before the end of the year. How he was going to arrive at this fund he had not the faintest idea, but if he had interpreted the Divine Intention aright, the means would somehow be provided. Should his confidence, on the other hand, prove to have been presumptuous, and he was still penniless, he

would then reconsider the responsibility of persevering in an attempt which for some good purpose God desired him to suspend." Thus, from a business standpoint, the whole destiny of a great national revival lay in the possibility or impossibility of gathering together £300.

Offers of suitable houses now poured in upon the Superior from all sides, but as these overtures were only of a commercial nature, they could not be negotiated except in a preliminary sense. Three gentlemen from Norwich, amongst others, arrived upon the scene, and invited Brother Ignatius to go over and inspect some premises in their town, which being on a portion of the site of an old Dominican Monastery, they thought he might deem appropriate for the installation of his Monks. These three gentlemen afterwards became the most loyal friends and supporters of the persecuted Benedictines through the many vicissitudes of their Norwich experiences and perils; and as by quaint coincidence their surnames commenced respectively with the letters C, A, and B, the brilliancy of the local wit dignified this faithful trio by the flattering sobriquet of the Norwich "Cab."

The chance of securing a residence on already consecrated ground was in itself sufficient to take the Superior to Norwich on a tour of inspection; and in company with his new friends he forthwith made acquaintance with Elm Hill (the house in question), and became convinced of its admirable adaptability for conversion into a nineteenth-century Monastery. It was a weird and rambling old mansion, containing about forty rooms, some in a half-ruined condition, and had been formerly inhabited by "one Elisha de Hague, whilom Town Clerk of Norwich." Since those good old days, however, it had lain long unused and had seen many changes, its last tenant having been, according to the *Norwich Argus*, a rag and bone merchant.

The finger-marks of time and wilful dilapidation were not the lightest old-world breaths to be drawn from this crumbling reliquary of dead tradition. There was the ghost of Monachism to be met at every turn, and although

the Chapel of the Black Friars was then perverted sacrilegiously into a common dancing-hall, the sacred edifice was still extant, and immediately adjacent to the portion of the building which the Benedictines would have to inhabit, albeit outside their territory.

Brother Ignatius returned to Claydon to dream of the Dominican Priory, and war with the pecuniary impossibility of establishing his own Monastery on the same holy ground. Where to turn for help he knew not, and as days drifted into weeks the pressure of anxiety became unbearable. Then, at an unexpected moment, and after every hope and expedient had been reduced to ashes, Mr. Drury broke in with the splash of an inspired idea. Why should not the Superior earn the money himself, and thus place his Community on a doubly independent pivot? The fame of his powers as a preacher had already gone before him far and wide, and if he could magnetise the hundreds round Claydon by the magic of his tongue, what should prevent him from utilising this precious gift for the conversion of the thousands in the distant vineyards, and the gathering in of adequate funds for the launching of a venture which he knew to be blessed of God, and undertaken solely for His glory?

Such an idea was not only an absolute novelty to the young Superior, it was almost a shock; nevertheless, he ended by adopting the suggestion, as in duty bound. Time pressed, and the skeleton in the empty treasury made its existence more obtrusive every day, so forth on a lecture circuit went Brother Ignatius, beginning with Ipswich, and ending as far south as Porthleven, Cornwall, with an after-climax in London—a step of exceeding boldness, which he himself looks back on with amazement. It required no small amount of moral courage to travel in hood and sandals in those days, and it was with no sanguine or self-reliant mind that the Monk hailed the sunrise on his first advertised date. The “proof of the pudding,” however, embodied a most gratifying result. The Ipswich audience happened not only to be a crowded but sympathetic one,

and when all expenses were paid a balance of £13 remained in hand. Armed with these golden first-fruits, and decidedly cheered in spirit, Brother Ignatius pushed his way resolutely through the provinces, making a powerful appeal for the revival of the monastic institutions in his country's Church, and gaining everywhere sincere interest both in himself and his work. Some of his most successful addresses were delivered in Exeter and Taunton, but even in the extremities of primitive Cornwall, where the name and sight of a Monk must have been things unknown, except in the pages of the village school histories, he was well received, and his eloquence appreciated, though his Mission may have been scarcely understood. Only once did his Cornish congregation threaten to fight shy of him, and this was in a very remote hamlet, where the inhabitants had been informed by some wag that a Monk was a species of savage, and that he wore no clothes! The sight of his ample black habit, however, soon dispersed this uncomfortable delusion, and the whole locality turned out to hear him, and to talk about his strange garb and doctrine, for at least a year to come.

When the Monk reached London, to fulfil his final engagement at St. Mary Magdalene's, Munster Square, he actually carried with him a net profit of £270. The tour had been blessed beyond all his hopes, and he felt that with a superhuman effort, the dream of Elm Hill, Norwich, might indeed become a waking reality. But Christmas was very near, and thirty pounds were still wanting to complete the necessary minimum. His last chance lay in the offerings he might be able to elicit from the Munster Square congregation, but he judged almost despondently that the advent of a Monk in the Metropolis was not likely to be received in a particularly cordial or even tolerant spirit. The Vicar of St. Mary Magdalene's (the Rev. E. A. Stuart) was an old and personal friend, and in the kindness of his heart he made it a point of conscience to try and dissuade his young colleague from what he deemed to be a hopeless and mistaken sense of vocation. "Look here, my boy," he

said pityingly, when they had talked matters over in the quiet of the old sacristy, "you are just running your head into a noose. Take the word of an old friend, that you will never come out of all this alive. One of three things must happen—either you will wear yourself out straight off, go raving mad over it, or fail ignominiously. In any case, you will never pull it through."

The speaker of these sanguine but common-sense platitudes was himself a most worthy but peculiar individual. He was a sincere and fervent Tractarian, and bore the bitter outcries of the Philistines against the Popish "goings on" in his parish church with the unruffled equanimity of a child. But, like Dr. Pusey, he was strangely primitive and conservative so far as his own person was concerned; and his adoption of the much-abused vestments for the Eucharistic Rite was, to say the least, original and unique. To the observant onlooker, this was the picture he presented when vested for High Ceremonials. Indexing his apparel in an upward direction, the following items were its most striking features. A pair of elderly boots, surmounted by half a yard or so of trouser-leg. Higher still, an occasional glimpse of an antiquated alb, and on the top of all, a gorgeous chasuble! The effect of this extraordinary *ensemble* was enhanced by the addition of a collar which reached his ears, a prodigious white tie, and a flowing pair of Dundreary whiskers.

No one in the congregation ever expressed surprise or scandal at any innovation which might be included in the ritual at St. Mary Magdalene's, Munster Square, but when it was announced that an Anglican Monk would occupy the parish pulpit, the tide of curiosity rolled high. "Now, boys," said the eccentric Vicar to his choir on the eventful day, "mind you all sing out. A Monk is coming to preach, and the boy who sings the loudest shall come and see him afterwards in my room." "Please, sir," piped one of the smallest present, "is he in a cage? . . . for if he ain't, I'd rather not come!"

In the mind of the local Bobby, also, some doubt seemed

to linger as to the exact definition and purpose of this monastic visitation. Long before the hour for service arrived, a large crowd assembled at the church door, a sight so unusual, that a lady passing, stopped her carriage and inquired of the policeman what it was all about. "Don't know, I'm sure, mum," was that worthy's ambiguous answer, "but I believe they've got a Monk or something in this 'ere church."

A very special interest attaches itself to this service. When Brother Ignatius entered St. Mary Magdalene's Church, he had a deficit of an unattainable thirty pounds staring him in the face, but by a strange coincidence, which may be called Providential, the offertory (with a surplus of a few pence) gleaned on this occasion amounted exactly to this very sum, thereby proving that, although God might sometimes permit His young servant to be "tried to the top of his bent," His protecting Hand was nevertheless stretched forth to snatch him back from actual ruin and despair. Our Reverend Father has been many times led into the depths of Gethsemane, but on each occasion, soon or late, an angel has come and ministered to him, and more than once he has been face to face with Jesus under the shadow of the Olives.

There was a peculiar fatality about those vital thirty pounds. Brother Ignatius was too poor in those days to go about London accompanied by one of his Brothers, much less to indulge in the extravagance of a sumptuous cab. His mode of locomotion alternated between his ten toes and the humble "'bus"; and, having no excuse for a banking account, he was forced to carry his capital, reduced to the most portable shape possible, in his own pocket. One day, after leaving the omnibus in Tottenham Court Road—and it was the very afternoon that he was bearing his treasure back to Claydon—he suddenly found his purse missing, and though he strove to follow the omnibus he had just quitted, as best he might on foot, the chase in the crowded thoroughfare was an impossibility, and he found himself landed, breathless and penniless, at the mercy of the

curious passers-by, and without the means of extricating himself from his lamentable plight. There was no friend within miles to whom he could turn, and as to his family—with the exception of his mother, who was at that time far away in Italy—there was not a soul to whom he could even unburden his load of grief.

It was a desperate situation, and, overcome with fatigue and mental misery, he turned into a hairdresser's shop and asked leave to sit down a moment and rest. This permission being accorded, he had a quiet chance of envisaging his loss. Realising the overwhelming nature of the calamity, his hands almost unconsciously sought the beads of his rosary, and there, seated at the counter of that sordid little shop, went up one of the most bitter cries that has ever left human soul.

After the recital of ten "Our Fathers," however, the shadows seemed lifted. So convinced, in fact, did the Monk become of the nearness of Providential interposition, that he was enabled to resume his walk, and with a cheerfulness of spirit almost incongruous with his destitute condition. Not thirty steps down the street a tap on the shoulder broke in upon his meditations. "I beg your pardon," said a gentleman courteously, "but have you not lost your purse?" "Yes, indeed I have," was the fervent reply; "I must have dropped it somehow in getting out of the omnibus." "If you will come with me," continued the new-comer, "we will soon get it back. I saw you drop it, and the conductor pick it up. I have been looking for you ever since. Let us make haste, for that same omnibus will be back on its return journey in a few moments, and if you will keep close to me I will help you to claim your property. No one can pretend not to recognise you," he added not unkindly, but with a quizzical look at the stranger's outer man.

By aid of this friendly intervention, Brother Ignatius was thus miraculously enabled, not only to waylay and stop the omnibus in question, but also to demand the restitution of his precious money-bag. Once in safe

possession of his hardly-earned gains, he lingered no longer in the crowded and bewildering London streets, but, taking the first train that offered, he returned to Claydon Rectory, with a heart divided between thanksgiving to God for so signal a mark of His merciful protection, and a nervous shudder at the recollection of the strange adventure which had so nearly been the overthrow of the entire future of Monasticism within the pale of the British Church.

There was now no longer any reason for postponing the negotiations at Norwich. It was at first considered desirable that the Brotherhood should only aspire to the Elm Hill property as yearly tenants, but, owing to some technical difficulties in the tenure, it was afterwards decided that an out-and-out purchase would be the more satisfactory course and the simplest. As a guarantee of good faith, the Superior was called upon to deposit a preliminary sum of £50 with the landlord, after which payment he was at liberty to take possession, and work off the remainder of his debt—some £500—by small instalments. On the 20th of January 1863, Brother Ignatius thus announced to a friend the prospect of his translation from Claydon to a still wider field of enterprise. "To-day," he wrote, "I receive the intelligence from Norwich that the old Dominican premises are ours. *Deo gratias!*"

Ten days later, and less than a year after his arrival at Claydon, Brother Ignatius—henceforward to be called Father by right of the Canons of his Rule—entered his first independent Monastery, and commenced Community life as a life-vowed Monk, and the first Benedictine in the British Communion since the days of the (misnamed) Reformation.

For many of the details which are now about to follow, I am indebted, not only to the memory of the Reverend Father himself, but to the convincing testimony of several persons then resident in Norwich, and who are still able to furnish me with many most valuable sidelights for this part of my work. Here, for instance, is the personal

impression of a friend, who chanced to be present at the Norwich railway station when the Monk arrived to take up the reins of government over a body of fellow-men, two of whom were old enough to be his father. "He looked just a mere bit of a boy," says this eye-witness emphatically, "as thin as a lath, and with hands so transparent that when he raised them towards the light you could see right through them. No one ever thought he would be able to stay a month in the place, to look at him, but" (and this with a significant laugh) "he very soon showed us what he was made of."

CHAPTER XIX

"IN WATCHINGS, OFTEN . . . IN FASTINGS, OFTEN"

"Jesus! sweet Refreshment
When our spirits faint,
Flashing forth sweet Visions
Love alone can paint."

IT was on a bitter midwinter day—the 30th of January 1863—that our Reverend Father entered his Elm Hill Monastery as its Superior and owner. This historical event was celebrated in the most modest way possible, and under circumstances which rendered it almost pathetic. The snow lay thick upon the roads, not the ghost of a fire burned within the dilapidated grates, and scarcely a soul was to be seen, as the plucky new-comers wended their way on foot to what was henceforward to be their home. Even the most sanguine spirit on earth could scarcely fail to imbibe the depression of the surroundings. The house itself—the coveted possession towards which the hopes and prayers of so many anxious weeks had been directed—could scarcely be said to suggest either welcome or comfort. Even with the completion of the few urgent repairs needed to bring it within the distinction of a civilised habitation, the atmosphere breathed desolation on all sides. The doors could not boast of a lock between them, and on the ground floor few of the windows possessed even an apology for a pane of glass. In this delightful wilderness of bricks and mortar the wind played to its heart's content, and in combination with a constant incursion of chilly snowflakes and the head-long scampers of unmolested mice, did its best to lend the weird old place an individuality in which the

suggestion of bogeys was likely to play a prominent part.

The triumphal procession which made its entry into the Priory of St. Mary and St. Dunstan, Elm Hill, consisted of three living creatures, the Superior, one Brother, and a dog—the last a huge and magnificent animal, who in time of need served the double purpose of companion and blanket. At the outset of their Norwich venture, the two poor Monks possessed but one small bed between them—a straw mattress, on which they took it in turns to sleep. The second resting-place was supplied by the bare boards, the Superior's Breviary doing duty for a pillow, and the dog's warm body a species of covering which they were only too thankful to accept. The cold and destitution of those first few nights were things to be remembered. Some pieces of brown paper pasted up here and there did something towards keeping out the worst of the weather, but the blast of winter was relentless, and out of every nook and corner came a rush of cold, which they were powerless to escape, or even to mitigate with the challenge of nourishing hot food.

In eight days' time this long-suffering trio of men and beast were joined by several other Brothers, thus making in all a Community of ten or twelve souls (plus the dog). Unfortunately, most of these new-comers were entirely devoid of purses, therefore the small capital which remained over and above the £50 already paid out by the Superior, had to bear the burden of the entire current expenses. Like their Cistercian brethren in centuries gone by, the infant Community was almost entirely dependent on a daily Providence, and amongst the many painful memories which this critical period must always evoke, it is delightful to be able to point out some green spots of real simple kindness, with which the poorest neighbours of the Monastery sought to soften the hardships of its uncomplaining inmates. Volunteers in the shape of gratuitous carpenters, masons, laundresses, and glaziers, soon stepped into the breach, and though each one could only afford to

do a little, their combined efforts told. Forms were erected, walls mended, and some panes of glass gradually made their appearance in the ground-floor windows. This last item was in especial a much-needed amendment, for the wholesale draughts had already worked mischief. The Superior was laid low with a severe attack of rheumatism, and one of the Brothers likewise—an event which raised up another friend in need, a kindly doctor, who from that moment placed his services at the disposal of the Community.

Thus the wheels, once set in motion, began to turn at last, and though they rolled heavily and slowly, a steady progress was registered, and in an all-round sense. The cheerful spirit and genius of adaptability displayed by the Superior during the chaotic moments of this primitive "shaking down," were sources of wonderment to the more helpless Brothers. Besides presiding over the household as its spiritual head and referee, he found time to lead off in person all the manual and culinary labour inseparable from the maintenance of ten or twelve fellow-men. It is difficult to picture our Reverend Father in the act of giving a practical lesson in the best mode of applying black-lead or hearthstone, still more so to imagine him in the rôle of a Francatelli, tying mutton chops together with a piece of string, and cooking them by means of suspension over an open fire. Nevertheless, these were only a few of the many feats of domestic economy which he performed, with a reckless equanimity that was positively superb. Unfortunately, however, the practice necessary to perfection was wanting so far as the dishing-up of chops was concerned. The staple diet of the Community consisted chiefly of bread and potatoes, and it was only when some generous outsider chose to send in some gift in kind, that this simple menu could be varied.

But far from grumbling at their straitened circumstances, the Monks were only too thankful to be living Community life at all, and as long as their bodies and souls held together even by a thread, they determined to put every

penny they could scrape together into their chapel, for the adornment and lighting of the sacred shrine from whence the incense of perpetual intercession was to rise day and night. In a brief busy interim, the entire organisation, temporal and spiritual, of the Monastery was set in working order, the observance of the Rule strictly followed, and even the most rigorous details of its exigencies—the midnight and early dawn services—fulfilled. A strange phenomenon overshadows the first recital of Matins at Elm Hill Priory. This Office is said, as most of my readers are aware, at the chilly hour of two a.m., and is a long and trying one, being the principal Night Service in the Rule. On this special occasion, every soul in the small Community happened to be assembled in chapel, and their consternation may be understood, when, in the midst of their solemn devotions, the bell suddenly began to toll. To use the Reverend Father's own simile, their faces looked like so many green cheeses. In an instant a hasty roll-call was made in the mind of each terrified Brother, for with the first impression came the doubt whether one of their number had taken leave of his senses, or was indulging in some unseemly joke; but the impossibility of such a hypothesis was only too obvious. Every Monk in Norwich, their Superior included, was in his appointed place, and the bell itself was beyond the reach of outside vagaries, being hung in the centre of the house, and only available to those within. With every stroke the panic became more intense, and upon the Superior's suggestion that it would be well to ascertain the cause of the disturbance, not a soul dared move an inch, and he was fain to conduct his search alone.

The mystery was never solved. Outer doors and windows were found to be intact, and so uncanny a nerve-condition did the whole occurrence create, that when the time of the next bell-pulling came round, it was made memorable by silence. Not all the persuasions or prospective penances in the world could have induced one of those Brothers to have handled that ghostly rope, and once

again their Superior had to put their fears to shame by doing the ringing himself.

On the Ash Wednesday of the year 1863, the Monastery chapel was thrown open for public services, and the Reverend Father began his personal encounter with the souls in Norwich. The room in which this first service was held could only contain sixty persons, and that for the most part standing, for the household resources were too low to admit of an adequate purchase of chairs. The place was literally crammed to suffocation, many who could not elbow their way farther contenting themselves with being squeezed into a few cubic inches in the passages. It mattered not, so that they could only come within range of the strange fiery eloquence which fell from the preacher's lips. And from that hour this upper room in the dilapidated old house became, by tacit but unanimous consent, the mutual centre of all sorts of Christians, and even of those who professed not to feel the need of any creed at all. It is an undeniable fact that Elm Hill Chapel was systematically thronged with Dissenters, Roman Catholics, and Anglicans alike, and indeed by all denominations except that of the Protestant party, to whom this new outrage on the part of the "terrible Monk" was a challenge it was impotent to avenge.

Barring the register of this volcanic contingent, it took the Reverend Father exactly six weeks, reckoning from the date of his arrival, to gather up the people of Norwich into the hollow of his hand. Rich and poor, young and old—a great heterogeneous concentration of humanity, no matter what their opinions or prejudices might be—seemed to rush pell-mell under the shadow of this one unaccountable man, who was himself but a mere breath of flesh and blood, very young, very poor, yet withal an unextinguishable firebrand in the bosom of his country's Church.

He must have possessed a mighty counterpoise of magnetism—not to say inspiration, all the same, this ecclesiastical mystic—to have combined the propaganda of out-and-out Catholicism and the revival of an accursed

institution with the more intimate qualities of the Bible-preaching Evangelist, the face-to-face Missioner among souls.

To appreciate in full the inexplicable riddle of so significant a grip, it is necessary to take weight and measure of the spiritual atmosphere in which Norwich was involved during the period of which we are now treating. There is a very old man still living in the town, who not long since drew the attention of some visitors in the Cathedral to some handsome brass ornaments on the super-altar. "That's what Father Ignatius has done for Norwich," he said grimly, pointing to the Cross, candlesticks, and vases. "Before his time we'd no more have dared put up a flower or candle—much less a Cross—than fly, but he changed all that, *he* did, and now, bless you, they all do it." The testimony of many other former residents points still more directly to the condition of religious apathy and grooviness in which the whole city was sunk at the time of the monastic invasion. If Ipswich had been a centre of Protestantism, Norwich was doubly so. Its area was larger, and its ringleaders possessed of a degree of fanaticism which overstepped that of their Suffolk colleagues. Their attitude was therefore of a different pose in heraldry, but none the less menacing. Where Ipswich assumed the rampant, Norwich retained the passant—a toleration which was the outcome of superb disdain. The idea of any lasting influence being obtained by a "Popish" Monk in Protestant Norwich was a folly too preposterous for words. What had that orthodox town to fear from the wacry of one whimsical Ecstatic, when the anti-Catholic ranks were so strongly manned that not even the thoroughbred Romans in the locality dared so much as place an image of the Virgin Mother in their churches, or erect an altar to Her Name.

Yet, little by little, these very boasters, so confident in the security of their own party-fortress, were forced to come down a whole flight of pegs, and take to their guns. If the Monk-youth was mad, there was an uncommon method

in his madness, and contagion too; for every day that passed showed a record of desertion to his flag. Thus gradually the bloom upon the cheek of Protestantism faded into an uneasy pallor, and from thence into the jaundiced yellow of open discontent. It was one thing to lean against the shadow of the Episcopal Arm, quite another to test the substance of the biceps muffled in its flowing sleeve. The upper room at Elm Hill Priory was by rights canonical a monastic chapel, and therefore extra-diocesan, in the sense that it was the property of a self-governing body, who were lawfully exempt from recognition of the Bishop's jurisdiction. Expert opinion having pronounced an ultimatum on this indisputable fact, it only remained for the dogs of war to sharpen their teeth in ambush, and watch with drooped tails and ears the continuous filtering out of their faithful into the tents of the enemy.

Within two months of the Superior's advent in the town, it is no exaggeration to assert that Norwich, the largest city in all eastern England, and the hotbed of Protestantism, might have been mistaken for a Clairvaux or an Assisi, so utterly had it passed under the dominion of the young stranger Monk. The name of Ignatius was now in every mouth. It rushed into print, furnished the theme for drawing-room gossip, and found its way into the more serious circles of clerical conclaves. No one knew what to make of him or his doctrines. He was a positive anachronism, an incarnate echo of the long-ago days when Catholicism, instead of Chaos, filled the pulpits of the British Church, and Monks dwelt broadcast in the land, as national institutions, not targets for every species of cheap persecution that the modern mind could invent. The first impulse of Public Opinion was to shake its sides, its second to take strong measures of suppression, and its third to do nothing at all, for the best of reasons—that it was powerless. No expression of personal venom, even when backed by a satirical Press, could stem the force of the movement which was gradually penetrating into the country's heart.

The ecclesiastical newspapers were full of it, and as a natural consequence the army of easy-going clergy took up the cudgels of protest; while the few of their more zealous brethren who still dared to say their souls were their own, rose boldly on the other side, with the old schoolboy cry for fair-play all round.

Amongst these last was the Rev. Gerard Moultrie, then Headmaster of the Reading Grammar School, and since Vicar of Southleigh, near Oxford. Mr. Moultrie's name is so well known in the literary world as that of a very distinguished poet and essayist, that a few extracts from his personal comments on the Monk's ministry at this period of its development cannot fail to be interesting. At any rate, they are the jottings of a highly cultured Anglican priest—an eye and ear witness of the extraordinary wave of conversion (some might say proselytism) which had its source in the derelict home of Elisha de Hague, and spread like a whirlwind into the palaces and hovels of the far corners of Britain.

Thanks to the prolific columns of the *Church Times*, Mr. Moultrie was thoroughly *au fait* as to the attitude assumed by the Benedictine Revivalist, and it interested him not a little. Being a large-minded man, as well as a student who never failed to glean knowledge when the opportunity came within reach, he determined to take a run to Norwich, and see for himself whether this Monk Ignatius was anything at all like what his enemies painted him to be, and if his influence over the minds and souls of the provincial townsfolk was one half as mighty as the feverish reporters pretended to surmise. Taking the bull by the horns, Mr. Moultrie abandoned himself to the thrall of adventure, and sought hospitality at the door of the Monastery itself. After a three days' sojourn within its walls, where, contrary to outside prophecy, he had neither been thumb-screwed, cast down an oubliette, nor buried alive, he thus expresses himself on the monastic system and its chief promoter, the notorious Father Ignatius, of whom he had heard so many and weird things:—

"This movement may be fanatical, and it may be irregular in its working at first, but it is assuredly not a thing to be laughed at." Going on to a more personal view of the Superior, he adds: "I feel prevented by delicacy from giving a minute description of one for whom a three days' acquaintance has inspired me with a feeling of more than friendship. His oratory is of the very highest order. I have never heard anything like it in our Communion. In fact, he can do what he likes with a congregation. It is my firm conviction that Father Ignatius will prove to be the greatest orator the English Church has ever had. I say this deliberately, with considerable experience of pulpit eloquence both in Great Britain and on the Continent. Give that young Monk standing-room, and he will shake English Protestantism to its centre. I could not have believed that in two months, or in two years, such a work could have been done for souls as I saw before me in Norwich. It was marvellous!"

These and others of Mr. Moultrie's observations I have been able to glean from the reprint of a letter to the *Church Times*, which was published by permission of the Editor as an appendix to a work on Monasticism written by the late Charles Walker in the year 1864. Later on in this volume, I shall have occasion to quote further passages from this same source, for as Mr. Moultrie's introduction to Elm Hill Priory resulted in his becoming a Priest of the Third Order of St. Benedict, his documentary evidence is not only valuable as that of an intelligent passer-by, but doubly so as a personal participator in the undercurrent of inner life, which is quite apart from the outward and visible veneer, so often to be met with in successful enterprises, whether of a spiritual or commercial kind.

Another thing! As a Priest, and the only specimen of the ordained clergy under the monastic roof, he had special opportunity—and a frequent one, too—of coming into contact with souls, and thereby measuring and weighing the actual work accomplished under cover of the babel of conflicting criticisms. Many and numberless were the

confidences made him during his strange and out-of-the-world experience under the Rule of the Saint of Nursia, and for personal satisfaction as well as a psychological study he proceeded to probe the why and wherefore of the incongruous influx of all sorts and conditions of Christianity to the limited and unlovely quarters of the improvised chapel. Dissenters, when pressed for an answer, asserted that they came because "they felt the preacher took them nearer God"; and the Papists, when gently reminded of the unorthodoxy of their presence in an heretical place of worship, showed still less symptoms of compunction. "They could not believe," said they, one and all, "in the schism of a Church which was vouchsafed such spiritual vitality." It was most difficult to diagnose the situation or criticise it. One thing, however, appeared certain—the Monk's powers of eloquence were passing through the field of souls like a two-edged scythe, and he could count his conversions by sheaves and scores of sheaves. Hundreds flocked daily (and they would have done so hourly too, had it been possible) to the Monastery chapel, and before it had long been opened to outsiders, men were even to be found knocking for admittance when the bell rang the Community to the choir for their long and trying Night Offices.

This state of things soon brought about the necessity for providing the zealous seculars with more convenient accommodation, but inasmuch as this would mean knocking several rooms into one, and a consequent outlay which the Priory coffers were at the moment too insufficient to meet, the plan had to be postponed, and the congregations packed away as heretofore like sardines in a barrel. It speaks volumes for the sincerity of these souls, the cheery way in which they suffered the discomfort of these close quarters. The Monastery adherents were of the most indiscriminate social classes. In the chapel itself, up the stairs, and along the passages, Dives and Lazarus, the noble and the tramp, stood side by side, or knelt together in a line before the altar of the Greatest Socialist our earth will ever see. Perhaps it was this sublime note of spiritual

"Egalité! Fraternité!" which lent the Monk's Mission at Norwich its final inspired touch. He was no respecter of persons, only of souls; and although the intellectual quality of his oratory made it doubly attractive to the highly educated portion of his listeners, yet its extreme simplicity held it equally within the comprehension of the young or ignorant.

It is easy for the rich to be charitable at all times, very difficult for the poor; and the best proof of the love and veneration in which his humble brethren held the Superior of Elm Hill Priory lies buried in the hundred and one little deeds of kindness and self-sacrifice by which they sought to soften his own privations and the sufferings consequent on his delicate health. There was no mincing matters, the Monks were terribly poor. Every farthing they could spare had to go towards the support of their services, and for food and firing they were very often dependent on their outside friends and the offertories, which at the outset were very rare and small. On Saturday nights, however, things soon began to look up. By general request, a collection in kind then took place, an innovation which permitted those in trade to bring some little contribution from their own stock of wares—a charity which did not make so appreciable a hole in the week's wages as the positive deduction of money. No sight can ever have been more quaint or touching than the gathering together of those Sabbath-eve harvests. A surviving member of the congregation recounts the scene even now with something like a tear in his eye, as he recalls the way in which the Brothers, armed with trays, used to pass to and fro amongst the faithful to receive their mites. It is impossible to index the heterogeneous list of articles which found their way into those devoted trays. Every one gave something, no matter if it was only a pinch of tea, or one or two dried herrings, and when the collection came to be sorted and classified, its items presented a variety that defied description. Here are a few of the leading features—candles, onions, butter, potatoes, small portions of meat, (sometimes) cough lozenges for "the

preacher," fish, soap, cheese, and jam, quantities of jam, also a supply of bread that was quite inadequate to spread it upon. Nor was this all. Gifts of articles too voluminous to be put in the trays, such as a sack of coal or coke, were offered separately at the chapel door, and on one occasion two fenders found their way upstairs—the property of a poor old woman, who said "it was all she had to give to the poor dear young Monk, but that now she should save her hen's best eggs for him." A frilled flannel dressing-gown, specially addressed to the Superior, was among the unusual articles washed up by the weekly tide. Its sender was a benevolent lady, who in an accompanying note stated that "she herself had been seated over her fire in this comfortable garment, when a sense of the inclemency of the weather overcame her, together with the reflection that if she, with all her luxurious surroundings, felt cold and shivering, how much more so must be the fragile-looking and poverty-vowed Monk, in his bare, bleak Monastery on the turn of the Hill?" And, inspired by her womanly impulse, she determined to transfer her treasure to her more needy neighbour, whereupon she stripped it off, and despatched it without more ado.

On opening the mysterious parcel, the astonished Community at first thought they were in presence of some obscure or disused article of ecclesiastical vestiture, but a closer inspection soon dispelled these illusions. It was a flannel dressing-gown, pure and simple, while the dimensions of its "cut" in general, added to the fluency of its frills and furbelows, left no doubt as to the absolute femininity of its origin.

Consternation followed, to be merged later on into amusement, by the perusal of the dear old lady's letter. But certain it is, that even if monastic history is silent on the ultimate fate of that monumental garment, the hilarity it produced in the Community was in itself a consummation of the donor's intention, inasmuch as, from the Superior downwards, they laughed until they were thoroughly warm, all round.

CHAPTER XX

"AND THE LORD TURNED AND LOOKED . . ."

"This is the symbol of God's Love,
So great, so wondrous strong;
This is the theme of angels bright,
They laud it in their song."

THE many of the reading public who must have met with the Rev. Gerard Moultrie's beautiful poem, "The Altar Vigil," may hardly be aware that its mother-motive was derived from a miraculous occurrence which took place in the Elm Hill temporary chapel, during the author's visit of investigation already referred to.

In his official capacity of Priest, it was a natural consequence that Mr. Moultrie should offer his services to the Community, the more so that he knew the Superior to be in Deacon's Orders, and no appointed chaplain as yet in residence. The Monks were in the habit of attending daily Mass at a church in the town, where the Rector kindly celebrated each morning on their special behalf; but with the presence of a Priest-visitor in their household, they were able to supplement this privilege by offering the Divine Sacrifice at their own altar. These solemn functions were as a rule choral, the Superior presiding at the organ and leading the singing, while his Monks and Third Order Brothers divided between them the duties of choir and sanctuary. It is from one of these lay-Associates that I have been able to gain more than a few details of the mysterious manifestation I am about to relate, and of which he himself was a personal eye-witness.

Amongst the Norwich relics still treasured in the Abbot's cell at Llanthony is a certain standard Crucifix,

which on the Good Friday of every year is borne into the Abbey church to take its allotted part in the great ceremony of the day—the “Creeping to the Cross.” This sacred emblem—a very simple one—is known as the Miraculous Crucifix, for the reason that once, and once only, with a wherefore that has remained unanswered, it became animated with a throb of supernatural life.

In the Elm Hill chapel this same symbol figured as the Altar Crucifix. It stood upon the improvised Throne, and overshadowed the Mystery of the Elevated Host and Chalice in the supreme periods of the Mass, and it likewise surmounted the primitive Tabernacle, where an historical as well as spiritual Masterpiece lay enclosed—nothing less than the first and (then) only Reserved Sacrament in the post-Reformation British Church. Yet it was neither in the awful consummation of the Consecratory Whisper, nor yet in the breathless silence of Sacramental Exposition, that the miracle was wrought, but at the familiar profession of our Christian Faith, the “*Crucifixus etiam pro nobis*” of the Nicene Creed.

The chapel was as usual packed with worshippers of all classes, and even as far out as the quaint old courtyard, crowds of late-comers who could not gain admittance either on stairs or within doors at all, were gathered in the hope of catching some portion at least of the Monk’s words, when the moment for the sermon or meditation should arrive. At the altar itself stood the celebrant, Mr. Moultrie, the Superior being seated at the organ, with his back necessarily three parts turned upon the sanctuary. He was engaged in playing as well as leading the chant, and therefore too much absorbed to be aware that “a thing of wonder and of fear” was taking place at his very elbow. Almost involuntarily, and as a subconscious act of tribute, Mr. Moultrie sang his Credo with his eyes raised to The Crucified, whose Incarnate Life-Story he was devoutly telling; but albeit a poet, this Priest may be described as a level-headed man, one in fact whose religion did not touch upon the ecstatic or extreme. His amazement, not to say

terror, may be then imagined, when, at the reiteration of the Passion Climax, he distinctly saw the Figure on the Cross move.

First the upturned Eyes closed and re-opened, then the Head, which was originally raised, fell forward as in contemplation, and finally the Face turned right round and fixed Its gaze on the Monk Ignatius. The look, said Mr. Moultrie, was one of ineffable sweetness, and it was bestowed so slowly that he was able to grasp its full intensity, but that was all. After a moment's space, the Head gradually regained Its former pose, the Lids lifted once more, and the Crucifix became what it had been before—an inanimate image. One who was present tells me he will never forget the expression of Mr. Moultrie's face during the singing of that Creed. It was that of a man who had received an almighty shock—an unearthly impression—and those near him, the only ones who were in a position to take note of his strange looks and trembling hands, declared that they were longing eagerly for the Mass to be over, so that they might know what had occurred to raise such extraordinary emotion in so calm and usually self-controlled a personality. One of the most mysterious aspects of this miracle must always be its significance—the meaning of that long loving look turned on the unconscious player at the organ. Until apprised of the fact by Mr. Moultrie himself, the Monk had no idea that anything supernormal had taken place, still less had he been aware of being the definite recipient of a Divine privilege. Ignatius of Jesus did not know that his Lord had indeed "turned and looked" upon him.

At Mr. Moultrie's suggestion, the whole Community accompanied him back into the chapel after the service, and one and all joined in reciting the Creed before the Crucifix—the Superior being amongst the number. The Priest was inclined to interpret this vision of the morning somewhat as the precursor of still more wonderful manifestations, therefore it was in the spirit of the child Samuel

that they repeated the solemn formula, and as servants waiting for their Lord to speak.

But the door was shut! The Divine Hand is not to be forced even by the most devout of human pressure. Not a single breath from beyond the stars came to crown that anxious vigil, and to this hour it has never been whispered outside heaven, the real purport of that ineffable look cast from Calvary upon the chosen one—the Monk.

It is now time to introduce yet one other clerical friend, who furnishes a somewhat important figure to this portion of our work—the Rev. E. A. Hillyard, Rector of St. Lawrence, the church at which the Monks attended daily Mass during the earlier period of their Norwich chronicles. Mr. Hillyard's first acquaintance with the Reverend Father was made at the Temperance Hall, Ipswich, on the occasion of the Monk's memorable lecture on Monasticism in that place, and from the same moment he became not only a zealous convert to the movement, but likewise its devoted adherent and promoter. No sooner had the Community set foot in Elm Hill Priory than Mr. Hillyard placed the hospitality of his church at their discretion, and the disposition of his own soul into the hands of the Superior.

The aforesaid young Rector was known in Norwich as one of the easy-going Low Churchmen of the town—a very agreeable clergyman—who contented himself with Sunday services conducted from the “three-decker” combination of pulpit, reading desk, and clerk's stow-away, and the celebration of Holy Communion about four times in the Christian Year. His conversion to incipient “Popery” at the Monk's hands came therefore as little short of a thunderbolt. It was nevertheless a happy intervention, for besides being the means of forming a close friendship, it lent an undoubted edge and vertebra to what otherwise might have lapsed into a flabby spirituality. But Mr. Hillyard was not only an excellent man, he was an intelligent one besides, and having once felt the touch of the master-hand, he bent under it.

Unfortunately, however, for the peace of all concerned, some of the parishioners of St. Lawrence, and in especial one of its Churchwardens, looked with marked disfavour at the Rector's plunge into Catholic revival, and the changes that were being wrought in their time-honoured traditions. Most of all did they foam at the mouth over the ungodly incursion of such true wedges of Popery as the black-robed Benedictines under their orthodox Protestant roof. They resented their church being turned into a puppet-show (to use their own parlance), and as remonstrance with the deluded young parson seemed of no avail, they determined to wreak their displeasure upon the primary cause of all—the Monk Ignatius.

Elm Hill Monastery being a house of religious enclosure, the Community took no part in the parish duties, as at Claydon Rectory, and they were seldom to be seen in the streets of Norwich except on their journeyings to and fro from Mr. Hillyard's church, or when obliged to leave the cloister on urgent business. The chances, therefore, for tormenting them at pleasure were rare but regular. As usual, the Superior was singled out as a special target, and many and cunning were the plans made for his annoyance, or even worse. Inasmuch as the whole ambush of local Protestantism was only too ready to abet and inflame these demonstrations, they were not long in assuming serious dimensions. Crowds would assemble outside the Priory and church at the hours when the Monks were expected to appear, and as these human knots represented rival squadrons of friends and foes equally bent on battle, the result was precarious. But the Reverend Father went his way irrespective of all the warnings and entreaties by which his followers sought to make him realise the danger of his daily walks. Not all the pelting, hooting, and spitting upon in the world could make him modify his habits one jot. He only laughed at his friends' fears, by telling them he was not half good enough to be a martyr, and that they could make their minds quite easy on that score. So to church he went, and often more than once

in the day, too, with a cheerful equanimity which was far from being shared by those who walked at his side. One evening as he left St. Lawrence and was preparing to go quietly home, a preconcerted rush was made to mob him and knock him down. For this noble purpose a whole horde of yelling men and boys bore suddenly down upon him, driving a donkey before them—a crowning strategy by which they hoped to overthrow the object of their attack, and literally trample him to death. But in an instant a vigorous counter-charge was made from the opposition side, and in less time than it takes to record the fact, a tremendous scuffle ensued. Blows and opinions were lavishly exchanged, and the astonished Monk found himself swept helplessly off his feet, and after what seemed a mid-air transit, deposited in the centre of a bodyguard of strong Norwich lads. These plucky volunteers, closing round him in a tight square, went raiding broadcast among the degenerates in a manner that was bewildering to behold. Into the thick of the fray they dashed, bearing the rescued in their midst, and utterly oblivious of the detail that they were themselves half killing him in their magnificent efforts to clear his path. It was no easy progress, this jubilant procession uphill to the Priory. The rescuers forgot, in their fervour, that by grasping their beloved Father indiscriminately by his arms, girdle, and whatever portion of his apparel that came nearest to hand, they were depriving him of all independent power of movement, and thereby exposing him to considerable bodily risk. Wherever his champions swayed in his defence, he was forced to sway also, and when they stormed a breach (which they did frequently) by a precipitate onslaught, off he was dragged in their wake like a leaf on a great ebb tide. The situation would have been intensely humorous, had it not been associated with a sense of dislocation, and buffets without number.

“If my enemies did not altogether kill me that time,” is the Reverend Father’s own reflection on that stormy home-coming, “I assure you my friends very nearly did. When

by dint of fighting and struggling, they at last managed to get me to the Priory door, I thought they would really have done for me. With the mob pressing on us from behind, it was very difficult to get the postern open, and when at last this was done, they pushed me into the courtyard with such force that I fell on my head, and very nearly cracked my skull."

The genuine devotion which the Monk has always had the gift of arousing amongst the young and turbulent ones of his flocks was one of the deepest footprints in all his Norwich ministry. The youths and boys who attended his chapel services and Bible class simply worshipped the ground he trod on. They might call him "Father Blazer," which a great many of them did, in hilarious moments, but it was with no thought of disrespect that this expressive title was bestowed. It was more than anything else an unvarnished tribute to the fiery gusts of exhortation and magnetic conviction which never failed to characterise this strange man's intercourse with those on the threshold of life. His grip over boys, in especial, ever was and is supreme. When for the first time he opened a Bible class in Norwich on Sunday afternoons, nearly five hundred members presented themselves, some amongst them being local celebrities in anything but a promising walk of life. Yet there was no active system of coercion practised by which these young rebels were licked into shape, no form of chastisement held out as the consequence of a superfluity of naughtiness. The Superior would simply give "one of his looks round" at the assembled urchins, and accept their good behaviour as a foregone and natural conclusion. "Of course you will be quiet and attentive while I speak to you," was the most severe parenthesis he was ever known to address to them. "If any boy makes a noise, I shall feel sure he is mad, and I am afraid we shall have all to call him 'the mad boy' for a very long time afterwards, which would grieve me very much, but we should do it."

This was quite enough. The instruction was listened to with profound attention, and in a silence which spoke

volumes for the affection of several hundred rough boys, packed together into the smallest space possible, and that within ear-shot of all sorts of Sunday afternoon distractions going on outside. With the big boys likewise—the young men of the town—the Reverend Father held equal sway. Many of them joined his Third Order, and one and all were ready to stand by him like faithful bulldogs when danger signals were along the line.

It was almost wholly owing to the grit of these very youths and their friends that the Monk ever reached Elm Hill alive on the memorable occasion just recorded. A good deal of personal danger and unpopularity also attended their efforts. No sooner had they shut and barred the Monastery door upon their Father and themselves, than the crowd without became mad with fury, and the admonitions of the police, who had by that time assembled, were utterly unavailing to establish order or clear the thoroughfare. The mob thirsted for vengeance, and sought to soothe its injured feelings by hammering with fist and heel upon the unresponsive door, besides vociferating flowery compliments to those beyond their reach. Nothing would induce them to "move on," and after a considerable interval of hopeless confusion, the Superior was seized with a desire to try his own personal powers of persuasion as a supplement to those of the police.

For over half an hour did the terrified Community and Third Order Brothers entreat their Reverend Father not to risk his life by opening the Monastery door, but to no avail. At the end of that time, and on the plea that the increasing clamour and crowd must be unpleasant to their neighbours, he suddenly drew back the bolts and walked into the thick of the mob. "Good-night, all of you," he said cheerfully. "Don't you think you had better go home? There is nothing for you to wait for. It's all over now! No more fun to-night!" And with that he laughed heartily, and went back into the Priory, leaving his late enemies aghast at his apparition, and too much ashamed of themselves to do anything but disperse grumbling.

The above is only one acute instance of the spirit of murderous animosity which met the Benedictine Revival at every turn of its progress where it was possible for the Protestant enemy to lie in ambush. The Monks of Elm Hill knew that they carried their lives in their hands, and that the very spiritual vigour which God was imparting to their work was lending them the additional danger of being an acknowledged *power*, even if a hated one.

Mrs. Lyne returned from Italy to find her son famous—his name a national topic, and his person the centre of every species of attack that the combined war-offices of Church, State, and Individual could devise. Her first visit to Norwich must have indeed evoked a strange combat between pride and pain in her heart—pride in the palpable proof that her child's life-dream had been realised, and pain—bitter pain—in the knowledge that this great end had been accomplished by a persistent strain of mind, body, and soul, that was gradually pulling brick after brick from the structure of an already exhausted physique.

It was so womanly, so truly mother-like, the way in which this gentle lady sought to break in upon her Monk's self-imposed poverty, and lighten his frugality with nourishing little nothings from the invalid dietary. During the solemn fast and silence of the Lenten season, her anguish made her even bolder. The sight of his pale, wan looks was more than she could bear, and she actually carried him with her own hands some steak and stout—a loving but unorthodox proceeding which somehow did not escape notice, and was charitably placed under the magnifier of the comic London Press.

Nevertheless, as even the most convincing of arguments is adorned with two sides, it is only just to admit that the Superior of Elm Hill was raking up a very goodly fire of unheard-of innovation in his native Church, and more, that he was working with preconceived intent, and with a contagious sway which threatened to become awkward, to say the least. Therefore, if the public tore his name to shreds, and the Press pounced upon him at every possible

opportunity, he was only reaping the penalty of a position which he himself had chosen to create, and seemed in a fair way to develop into a scourge for the broad back of Protestantism.

It is a wonderful lesson in comparison, to set side by side the first entrance of the Community into the Norwich Priory, and their relative position in less than one year from that date. During the interim they had merely lived their lives, and worked their work, without advance or retrograde from the original ground where their stand was made. They had not altered or yielded one inch of vantage, while those around them had shifted at least a mile. They were hated more, loved more, and their influence was every day putting forth new leaves—but these were all expressions of the mutability of outside atmosphere. The Monks had not changed, if the times had, but their aim was gradually making itself felt, not only talked about, and the result was, that it was planting a pickaxe in the fundamental staples of the National Church.

And yet beyond the sympathy of his own disciples, the energetic Monk had no moral support, scarcely even toleration. The Ecclesiastical Body strove to cut out his tongue, for fear it should become an unruly member and a thorn in the side of religious apathy, while Society tried to ignore his existence by reason of the plainness of his speech, and the still plainer manner in which he held up the mirror to the skeletons most commonly to be found in the secret cupboards of the rich with this world's wealth.

It was a mingling of many forces, this tacit combination to silence an unwelcome voice—the voice crying in the wilderness—and Church and State went arm in arm to the encounter. But forty years have come and gone since that day, and the Monk-Missioner has not been hushed up yet! Both clerics and seculars have put themselves to no end of trouble on his account, expended any amount of bile and money in plans for his suppression, but to what end?—blank defeat! Even as a single-handed Ishmael in

Christendom, the Monk of Llanthony has made his enemies his footstool, and borne his Gospel Message in triumph through their ranks.

Yet it was not without bitter pain in those early Norwich days that he noted the strong antipathy with which his Church—voiced by its earthly interpreters—regarded his growing enterprise. That the Bishop of the diocese should take up arms against him was not so much of a surprise as the timid attitude assumed by those who professed to share most of his own advanced views. Determined to seek distinguished spiritual counsel from a source which he had every right to suppose would be a sympathetic one, he wrote a long letter to the Bishop of Oxford, at that time the Episcopal representative of the High Church party. This letter was a very simple one. It was an appeal for advice on many difficult points connected with the Monastery itself, and furthermore it set forth the story of the Monk's own life, his call from God, and other intimate details relative to his personal vocation.

Dr. Wilberforce's answer was perhaps a characteristic one, if judged from the standpoint of the individual, rather than that of the official. In the theological balance it is better left uncriticised, both out of respect to the dead, as well as a silent tribute to the memory of a very popular wearer of the Purple Robe. This remarkable epistle, which was underlined "*secret*," most sententiously disclaimed all sympathy with the zealous Benedictine, as well as the most remote approval of anything approaching a revival of the monastic institutions in the British Church. On the subject of the Monk's own part in these proceedings, a still colder douche was turned. "He could not," said his lordship, "entertain the idea of any vocation which had not for its primary motive obedience to the Bishop." Of the more directly spiritual matters touched upon in the Superior's letter, not a word was said. It was evident from the general tone of the reply, that the convenience or inconvenience of a monkish resurrection in the Reformed Communion was a consideration which completely held under water the more

inspirational aspect of the enterprise, and absolutely drowned all thoughts of a direct call to the higher life.

This unlooked-for rebuff occasioned the Reverend Father no small grief and disillusion; nevertheless, he resolved to interpret it as a challenge. Resorting once more to his pen, he wrote Dr. Wilberforce a very respectful but strong protest in reply. Taking up the thread of the Bishop's reprovals, he argued each point down to the very quick, meeting his lordship with his own weapons, and causing that dignitary to make an indigestible repast of his own words. At the Monk's second letter, the See of Oxford put up its shutters! It vouchsafed no answer. Years later, however, when the good Bishop had passed over, and the biographer was busy among his bones, the ghost of this correspondence was revived. In the Wilberforce Memoirs is to be found the reproduction of the learned Doctor's epistle to the Monk Ignatius—a trunk minus head or tail. With that exquisite sense of justice so often to be met with in this Christian world, the Reverend Father's letter (to which Dr. Wilberforce's was only an answer) and the protest which succeeded it were carefully suppressed, although the restraining injunction "secret" was not to be found on either of these monastic originals.

The above detail is only one of the countless instances of the dogged pertinacity with which Church and State have tried to drown or stifle an inconvenient voice, and in the end been forced to stand back before a God-directed destiny.

CHAPTER XXI

"I HAVE FOUGHT WITH BEASTS AT EPHEBUS"

"Now warriors of the Cross prepare! Put all your armour on!
Unfurl the banners of the King—the victory must be won.
He sends us to the rescue now, of souls He bled to save,
Loud let its mighty war-notes ring! soldiers of Christ, be brave!"

IT is refreshing to be able to state that the chilly attitude assumed by the Bishops of Norwich and Oxford at the threatened reappearance of the religious habit in their dioceses, was not blindly imitated by all their brother-dignitaries. Following the Divine Example of the Great Bishop of souls, who was daily and almost hourly manifesting His power through the medium of the one young Solitary, there were yet those upon the Episcopal Bench who listened, watched, and waited, with interested attention.

Amongst these, and foremost to give the Monk his due—although as an onlooker, not a partisan—was Dr. Ellicott, one of the soundest theologians and astute scholars that the twentieth century has brought forth. This venerable prelate, who holds the See of Gloucester to this day, was in the year 1863 responsible for the diocese of Bristol also (a double burden which he has only relinquished quite lately), and it was in his combined capacity of Bishop of Gloucester and Bristol that the Reverend Father received a very signal and timely act of courtesy at his hands.

The occasion was the Church Congress of the autumn, held at Bristol for the purpose of discussing, amongst other topics, the advisability of restoring Collegiate Institutions in the National Establishment. The obviously monastic side which such a subject might be interpreted to present, was not lost on the Monk, who watched with sleepless

vigilance for the smallest breach through which he might drive his cherished scheme into the open country of a public cynosure. The Ecclesiastical platform, and the concentrated presence of his fellow-clergy—those who could so powerfully help to make or mar the realisation of his waking dream—and the opportunity of pleading his sacred cause before thousands upon thousands of highly-cultured men; all these were considerations enough to draw him from his cloister, let alone the crowning impetus, the going about his Father's business. As a Deacon of the English Church, he had full right to demand a hearing in the debate, so to Bristol he determined to go, and take his luck of the reception which might await him there.

The name of Ignatius being by this time well placarded all over the British mind as the Monk, the "firebrand," the "Popish wolf" which did sentinel in sheep-skin outside the fences of the Protestant fold, it is needless to say that the faintest rumour of his intended raid upon clerical Bristol was in itself a loadstone for attracting a vast concourse of warriors to the spot. The Congress of 1863 was a landmark in the history of Church and Lunacy, and it was also one of the stepping-stones to Llanthony Abbey, the Mother House of revived Monachism. This Conclave took place in a vast public hall, which was crammed from floor to ceiling by a crowd of curious controversialists and sight-seers, who supplemented, and it is to be feared seriously annoyed, the ordinary clerical audience which attended for the purpose of hearing and discussing the important business for which it was convened. On the platform sat the President, no other than Dr. Ellicott himself, and on either side of him swarmed a whole army of local magnates, and "the cloth," many of whom were well-known celebrities, that is to say, leaders of the innumerable divisions for which the Anglican Church holds the unhappy monopoly.

The Reverend Father did not put in an appearance until the vital question of the Collegiate Institutions for Resident Clergy was about to be laid on the dissecting-table; but at that juncture his black robes and tonsure were to be

seen making their way up the hall. The appearance of a real live Monk, albeit such a young and fragile-looking one, in the midst of a Protestant Conclave, was productive of nothing less than spiritual apoplexy in the souls of the spectators. It is a pity that snapshots were not known in those days, otherwise we might have some notable negatives wherewith to gratify posterity. As it was, a suppressed groan ran round the hall like the rising of a distant gale—a passive demonstration which soon developed into a positive hurricane of hoots, howls, and hisses, as the object of their ire quietly walked up to the platform and took his place at the left hand of the Bishop.

It was with the greatest difficulty that sufficient order was restored for a few of the preliminary speeches to be heard beyond the first few rows of front seats; but the climax was yet to come. When Dr. Ellicott, in the course of the programme, called upon the Rev. Joseph Leycester Lyne to rise and address the assembly, an indescribable babel ensued. The men in the auditorium yelled themselves hoarse, to an accompanying tattoo of boots and umbrellas, beaten *ad lib.* upon the hall floor, while the most enthusiastic amongst the "ladies" either shook their fists in the direction of the platform, or climbed unblushingly on their chairs, so as to get a more commanding view of the proceedings. It was as though the acute ward of Bedlam was let suddenly loose upon the scene; and so overwhelming was the storm of voice and gesture, that it was some minutes before the Bishop could gain a hearing, even for his own protest. As President of the Conclave, however, he ungloved his whip hand, though it cannot be quite honestly reported that his authoritative intervention was altogether agreeable to the occupants of the platform, who eyed their "peculiar" colleague with anything but unmixed sympathy. But the Bishop was not to be downed by a coercive public, and he had recourse to his official presidency as well as to logic. As reigning Cæsar of the occasion, he proclaimed silence, and in the rôle of able logician he pointed out to the surging multitude that they

were on the wrong side of their limitations. As a representative of the Anglican diaconate, Mr. Lyne had as much right to speak as any of the clergy present, and as President of the Conclave, he (the Bishop) felt it his duty to see that right respected.

Whereupon a hush fell upon the abashed thousands, and when the pause was complete and breathless, the Monk stood up to beard the lion of an angry British crowd. Luckily for himself, this awkward moment, like many subsequent ones in his stormy life, was rendered painless by the almighty sense of humour which overcame him as he took in the details of the massed humanity gathered together in every variety of posture and expression that the most delirious of imaginations could invoke. But the atmosphere was bloodthirsty, and he knew it; nevertheless, he was fain to prelude his remarks with a good-natured laugh.

"It was a pleasant surprise to him," he said, "to find that so many people were so thoroughly 'up' in the subject of Monasticism, and particularly in the Rule of St. Benedict; for of course, in an intellectual audience like the one he had the pleasure of addressing, he would not be so uncomplimentary as to suggest that there were people ignorant or silly enough to denounce what they knew nothing about. Therefore, to begin with, more than half the purpose of his journey to Bristol was anticipated—at least, so he ventured to believe, from the evident knowledge and appreciation shown by his highly-cultured hearers, on a subject which hitherto he had feared was likely to arouse but a limited and sickly interest, instead of the overwhelming one he was so proud to be able to report to his Community."

These few sparks of good-natured chaff, delivered with a command of comedy which has always pointed to a double-sided possibility in the Reverend Father's career, caused "the cloth" on the platform to grin aloud, and a distinct flutter of suppressed laughter to pass through the entire hall. At any rate the way was paved towards a hearing, and in a silence whose growth rivalled that of the

mustard-seed, the Monk passed from banter to the business of the day. His advocacy of the resurrection of ecclesiastical residences was long and powerful, and it abounded in sparks of witty satire, which lifted his subject far over the heads of tedium or technique. Amongst other points, he emphasised the obvious impossibility of adapting Collegiate Institutions to the use of any but Monks, or, to modify the expression—of celibates. It would neither be practicable nor desirable that these public residences should provide quarters for ladies, nurserymaids, or perambulators; therefore the whole gist of the scheme was necessarily centred in the one nutshell—Monasteries—shelters, and, so to speak, spiritual schools for men who from devotion had vowed to relinquish home life and ties, and to dedicate their whole beings to the service of God, either in the Cloister or the Ministry of His Church.

This uncompromising dissertation was listened to with profound attention, for it was one that was well calculated to bring into play the speaker's full force of eloquence and enthusiasm. Frequent gusts of applause interrupted him from time to time, varied by cries of "Shame!" and "Sit down!" but it was the name of St. Benedict which wrought the most havoc on the assembled nerves. Every time that the Rule of this immortal Saint was mentioned, no matter how lightly, its effect surpassed the unfurling of a scarlet ensign in the sight of a susceptible bull.

Nevertheless, the Monk had his say to the end, and when he had finished the entire audience rose to its feet and filled the great building with a deafening volley of counter-demonstrations. Leaving the platform as quietly as he had approached it, the cause of all this disturbance sought to abridge it by quitting the hall; but his exit was only the signal for renewed uproar. The yells of the crowds followed him even into the street, and it was evident that with the departure of the notorious "Popish idolater" all interest in the proceedings of the Congress was at an end.

That same evening the Reverend Father held a mass

meeting in one of the largest halls, and delivered a lecture on Monasticism before an audience whose vigorous overflow could scarcely be held at bay by the presence of the astonished local police. Every chair, every step, window-seat, and modicum of standing-room, was packed with men and women of every class or school of thought, including most of the representative clerical leaders who had figured at the afternoon Conclave. Amongst these were the Bishop of Salisbury, Canon Liddon, and Dr. Pusey, who were sandwiched together in a hopeless crush by the platform, the whole evening through. When the lecturer at last appeared, it was with the greatest difficulty he could be conveyed to his place at all, for with the presence of some religious pugilists who sought to make a demonstration at his entry, the perplexities of the situation were not lessened.

These zealous emissaries were, however, in time removed, or silenced, with the exception of one specimen, a burly bully who persisted in shouting "No Popery!" in stentorian tones, every time the Monk raised his voice to speak. For some time the Reverend Father waited patiently, thinking the good gentleman would tire of so strenuous an amusement, but finding he held out to an extent which was inconvenient, he had recourse to a little personal persuasion. "My dear sir," he said, addressing the offender, "I suppose that when you go to your butcher's shop, you are prepared to see meat hanging up in it. If I am, as you say, a Popish Monk, is it not equally natural that I should deal in Popery? You'll get nothing else, I promise you, here; so don't you think you had better go away, if it hurts your feelings?" This remonstrance, which was received with screams of laughter and applause by the crowd, had only the effect of inflaming the anger of the discomfited individual. Mistaking noise for valour, he vociferated louder than ever, and the Monk was at length forced to resort to more summary measures.

"Look here, my man," he exclaimed warmly, "fair-play, if you please! Having paid for this hall, it is mine, and

therefore I desire you to leave it, or restrain your ardour. If you continue to annoy me, I see a good many honest young Englishmen present, who, although strangers, will help me, I am sure. There is a pump situated near this hall, and I should not be the least astonished if you got a gratuitous bath for your pains."

The bully, however, bawled on undismayed, and then a sudden and appalling scuffle took place. Six powerful British lads made for the intruder, seized him bodily, and bore him out over the heads of the audience, amid a perfect hurricane of hands, feet, sticks, umbrellas, or whatever else suggested itself as an expression of delight. The glass doors leading into the lobby were smashed to atoms in the transit, but this trifle did not affect the six champions, who bore their enemy triumphantly to the pump, where they cooled his zeal with one of the heartiest duckings it has ever been the misfortune of mortal to enjoy.

Some minutes later, the sextet returned without him to the hall, and in a splashed but radiant condition which left no illusions as to the efficacy of their mission. The lecture was by this time in full swing, and it was listened to throughout with a respectful interest that contrasted almost ludicrously with the downpour of abuse hurled by many of these same people on the identical speaker and subject only a few hours previous. The ovation which greeted the Reverend Father at the close of his address was hearty and unanimous. It may be almost likened to a far-off and inverted echo of the Hosannas of the Procession of Palms, and the clamour in Pilate's Judgment Hall—the denunciation of the noonday transfigured into acclamation before the sun went down.

Soon afterwards the Superior of Elm Hill returned with a thankful heart to his quiet Monastery, feeling that he had just written finis to a very stormy but fruitful chapter of his life.

From this date forward the Monk's career may be said to have been one long and many-linked chain of strange eventualities. His power as a speaker was an established

fact, his courage to carry his free lance single-handed already proven; and of one thing there could no longer be a doubt—either God or the Devil was responsible for the supernatural occurrences of which he was so frequently the chosen centre.

Amongst these, the cures he wrought are not the least noteworthy. On one occasion he gave an epileptic some water to drink in which he had dipped a medal of St. Benedict, and she was forthwith healed of her infirmity. Another time he cured a raging toothache and insomnia, by giving the sufferer a shred of wool from his own scapular and causing it to be applied to the offending tooth. The relief obtained from this simple operation was instantaneous and lasting.

But it was not only as an inspired healer that the works of wonder were manifested in this inexplicable personality. There are many instances worth recording of the very singular and overwhelming way in which an Unseen Hand seemed to strike at those who railed at the defenceless Monk or sought to do him harm. I have only space to quote one or two of these phenomena, therefore I give preference to those which happen to be green within the memory of living Norwich townspeople.

A blasphemous curse from the lips of woman was on each occasion the incentive of these outpourings of Divine wrath.

One day, as the Reverend Father wended his way home from church, an unfortunate woman standing in her own doorway uttered an abominable malediction as he passed her by. The next instant she lay stone dead upon her threshold, struck down, as it were, by the sword of the Avenger. About the same time, an almost similar attack was made on him by a second virago, and her portion of retributive justice, though less tragical, was even more extraordinary than that awarded to her unhappy sister. This new delinquent contented herself with waylaying the Superior, shaking her fist in his face, and screaming "Curse your bald head!" till he was out of sight.

The saddest part of the story is now to come. It happened that this woman was the mother of an only child, a curly-headed little lad on whom she doted passionately, and it was through this very boy, the being she loved best, that God saw fit to lay His scourge across her soul. No sooner had she set foot at home than the lash of a heavy chastisement was upon her. By miraculous dispensation and before her own eyes, the entire mass of the child's hair literally fell from his head at her feet, leaving his skull a bald counterpart of the Monk's tonsure which she had so recently called on God to curse. I have been emphatically assured that in the twinkling of an eye the lad became absolutely hairless, and that his scalp upon medical examination showed no signs of any of the processes of capillary degeneration common to childhood. The blight of such a phenomenon may be imagined. Distracted with grief at her child's disfigurement, his mother took him first to one chemist, then another, and spent no end of money in drugs and lotions, which were applied in vain. Not a single hair could be induced to reappear on that poor little bald head, and a wig being a costly luxury and therefore out of reach, the boy was obliged to pass his days in a tight-fitting cap, which gave him a most weird and miserable appearance.

At length, after many weeks of useless regrets and expenditure, some friendly members of the Third Order interposed with a bright suggestion. They were convinced the case was clearly one of judgment, not disease, and they urgently advised the woman to waste no more time or money, but to go without delay and intercede with the man on whose head she had invoked the curse which was poured out instead on her own innocent child. It was a sharp tussle between pride and sorrow in that rough, headstrong soul, but in the end the passion of motherhood prevailed, and she presented herself that self-same day at the Monastery, taking the child with her as the living proof of the tale of misery she had to tell.

Some faint rumour of this mysterious retribution had already reached the Superior, but he had scarcely given it

credence, so accustomed was he to the ceaseless drizzle of absurd small talk with which his name was mercilessly associated. The sight, therefore, of the penitent mother and her unlucky victim affected him not a little. Here before his eyes was one more drop in his strange chalice of destiny, yet another witness risen up to testify to the astounding vigilance of the Keeper of Israel who neither slumbers nor sleeps.

The Reverend Father listened to the woman's outpourings with patience and compassion. When they had at last subsided, and at her earnest entreaty, he laid his hands upon the boy's head.

Despair is voluble, gratitude as a rule silent. My readers will not be shocked to learn that neither mother nor son ever again crossed the Monastery threshold, but they may be surprised to know that the Monk's prayer was heard in heaven on behalf of that suffering child. From his neighbours, and the busy little finger of town gossip, the Community learned the sequel of that laying on of hands. The boy's curls had been given back to him, and the first signs of his recovery had been apparent from a date identical with that of his visit to the Benedictine Priory.

This event, in conjunction with many others, lent a strong bias to the tide of opinion, favourable and unfavourable, which was swelling gradually round the Monk's name, and launching both himself and his Monastery into the great sea of public notoriety. He was now able to use his gift of oratory on all sides with a certainty of gaining a hearing, and the Bishop's inhibition was no hindrance, but rather an incentive to the assembling together of crowded congregations in every hall where he was announced to preach. As a foregone certainty, the animosity of the Protestant party trotted breathlessly alongside this increasing popularity, and disported itself in sundry outbursts and petty side-thrusts, wherever opportunity offered.

As the words "Protestant" and "Protestantism" are so

constantly to be met with in the Black Board departments of this biography, it is necessary to state that these unflattering terms are not intended to convey a sweeping condemnation of all who "protest" under the banner of this many-sided denomination. For the God-fearing, Bible-loving Christians who see fit to label their opinions with the primitive coat-of-arms of real religious Protestantism the Reverend Father has the most profound affection and respect. They have seldom caused him suffering, or dealt him injustice, and to this day they furnish some of the most sterling friendships in his long and lonely life. Against the polemical but unchristian Protestants alone are the weapons of his wrath turned, and especially against those sordid degenerates who distort their religion into a commercial stock-in-trade, and attack the principles or practices of the Catholic faith for no better motive than a money-grubbing speculation of the bucket-shop type.

It is from the slings and arrows of these outrageous counterfeits that the Monk of Llanthony has endured the martyrdom of being bled at every pore—a relentless pursuit of slander and persecution under which most men, even the strongest, would have died or become mad. As it is, each stone in his beautiful Abbey must needs be a petrified tear. Perhaps, after all, the greatest miracle which these pages record is the simple fact that the Reverend Father is still alive, and able to point to Llanthony as the spiritual beacon which has saved from shipwreck a fleet of souls from many lands. But the battle has been lifelong, and its dangers and desolations of an intensity that no pen may presume to picture.

Amongst the many cowardly aggressions of which the Protestant rabble have been guilty from time to time, a notable taste of their quality was given one night in Ipswich, when the Monk was announced to preach in the Public Hall, during the earlier days of his residence in the Norwich Priory. The venom of the Claydon spirit was still burning in the local veins, and the arch enemy was too wide awake to miss so golden an opportunity of avenging

its past failures by a public victory. So to the hall they repaired *en masse*, with the charitable intention of accompanying the preacher back to his lodgings after their own merciful fashion, and to the tune of an original serenade. The police somehow became aware of what was about to happen, but though they turned out in full force to guard the exit of the hall, they knew they would be overpowered by numbers—a forecast which was only too literally fulfilled.

Within the hall itself the crowd was orderly enough. Every seat and available inch of standing accommodation was piled with human samples of every class and persuasion imaginable, but the orator, who was aware of the explosive atmosphere in which he was involved, and therefore at his best, made it his business to hold them lightly and easily in hand, by an unwonted expenditure of that singular power which has so often served as sugar-plum to the double-dose administrations of his plain-spoken truths. The sermon was listened to by friends and foes alike in a silence which a fly-walk would have broken. It was only when the last word was spoken that the thunder-shower began to fall. An enormous gathering swarmed like wasps about the door, and those without being soon joined by their allies from within, the assailing army became a formidable and compact multitude.

Yielding to the entreaty of his friends, the Monk consented to be driven to his lodging in a cab, and to leave the hall by a side exit; but the crowd was on the watch, and even these precautions were insufficient to avert a crisis. No sooner was their intended victim's departure discovered and his cab "spotted," than their fury gave vent to a chorus of hisses and groans, and a stampede to give chase. The police vainly endeavoured to stem the rush, but they were quickly outnumbered, and the assailants went full cry in pursuit, only stopping to turn out all the gas-lights in the streets as they passed, and to smash as many of the lamp-glasses as they could contrive to reach without delaying their headlong steeplechase.

The cab, meanwhile, had put its best pace forward, and,

having obtained a start, made decided headway before its pursuers. Nevertheless, the danger was imminent. The Reverend Father was too well acquainted with the Ipswich ruffians to indulge in any surmise as to his probable fate, if unfortunate enough to fall into their clutches. His chief anxiety was for his travelling companion, a young Third Order Brother, the son of a Norwich magistrate, for whom he had a sincere regard. In an instant he had weighed the peril of their situation, and decided on a bold initiative. Capture meant certain death, therefore the risk of escape was the only alternative. It was a choice between waiting quietly in the cab to be torn to pieces, or taking their luck of dodging their pursuers on foot. The Monk took the latter course. Bidding Brother Cyril hold himself ready for a leap into the dark, he sat motionless until the vehicle had reached the vicinity of the house in which he had secured rooms, and which happened to be situated in a quiet street off the main thoroughfare. Then at a given signal both he and his companion made a dash for their lives. Without stopping the cab, they dropped quietly out of it, and in the darkness and confusion that reigned on all sides were actually able to slip unobserved into their lodgings before any one had become aware of their timely strategy. Once in safety, however, it was necessary to preserve the utmost secrecy. "Let every light in the house be put out," were the Father's first words to the terrified landlady, when the door was shut upon their retreat; and this being done, both he and the Brother retired to a window overlooking the war-path, and stood watching the disgraceful scene below without any suspicion of their presence being aroused.

The cab itself was by this time out of sight, but inasmuch as the route now turned up a hill, the rowdies were gaining on it rapidly. Only on the morrow, when the details were officially reported in the daily press, did the Reverend Father know to what outrageous extremities these drunken cowards had pushed what they dared to call their "Protestant demonstration."

On the brow of the hill stood a Convent school, and at the door of this religious institute the tired horse halted, sufficient time for the mob to close in and (as they imagined) seize upon their prey. The discovery that they had been wasting their threats and curses upon an empty cab was a shock for which they were totally unprepared, and with the inconsistent fury of actual wild beasts, they sought to avenge their disappointment on whatever came nearest to hand. No one knew where the Monk was sheltering, so they one and all concluded that this same Convent, being a Popish and idolatrous establishment, its inmates had naturally given a hiding-place to one of their own persuasion. So against the helpless Sisters and their girl-pupils the tide of this most chivalrous company was turned.

It was a night of terror for the nuns. Aroused from their sleep close on midnight by the cries and imprecations from without, their panic was unspeakable. Angry words and threats were soon supplemented by stones and the crash of glass on all sides, and the police being utterly impotent to disperse the assailants, the poor Sisters had resort to flight. Together with their pupils, they rushed straight from their beds into the road, where they would most certainly have met with rough treatment, had not their kindly next-door neighbour—a doctor—had the courage to gather up the whole cluster and give them shelter in his own house.

In process of time a vigorous reinforcement of police arrived upon the scene, and the mob was eventually mastered by the arrest of its ringleaders. Not, however, was this lull obtained until every pane of glass in the Convent had been smashed to atoms, and its peaceful inhabitants half frightened out of their senses by an uncalled-for and cowardly aggression, of which they did not even know the cause.

There is one amusing detail following on these unpleasant ones which must not be missed. When the local newspapers commented on "the events of the night," they

fluttered with the suggestion that whereas the Superior of Elm Hill Priory was the primary cause of the upheaval, the bills for repairing Convent windows, street-lamp glasses, and other damage done in the expression of public protest, should be paid from the Monastery coffers. To which cordial insinuation the Reverend Father was not long in replying. Said the Monk, "he was utterly unable to grasp the logic of such an argument. On the contrary, if the minister of God—a man of peace—came to preach a religious sermon in a Christian and English town, he had a right to be treated with the decency—let alone the conventional respect—due to his calling. If Ipswich, instead of being a civilised centre, was a human bear-garden, he regretted the fact, but held himself in no wise responsible. As to the intelligent suggestion that the aggrieved and not the aggressors should defray the expenses incurred by their disgraceful conduct, he should merely ignore so absurd and impertinent a claim."

This brisk interchange of sentiment formed the last paragraph of an unfortunate incident which has long since been happily buried under the enthusiastic receptions subsequently given the Reverend Father by his Suffolk friends. Only quite lately he had occasion to revisit the scene of his former persecutions, and to talk over old times with a few others who, like himself, are not likely to forget that memorable "fight with beasts" at Ipswich, instead of Ephesus.

CHAPTER XXII

"MY PRESENCE SHALL GO WITH THEE"

"Jesus ! let Thy Presence
Breathe a sense of rest
O'er our tired spirits,
By Life's toil oppress'd."

THE name of the Anglo-Benedictine Monk had by this time gained an audible footstep in every corner of Christendom. Not only had it become a source of income to his effervescent detractors, and a veritable annuity to the idlers in the Press Market, but it was likewise quoted in more disinterested circles as the Pioneer of a school of philosophy which must eventually reach far beyond the cloister, into the hearts and homes of many lands.

Amongst those who seemed best able to grasp—and therefore to appreciate—the real aim and purport of this single-handed endeavour, was no less a personage than Cardinal Wiseman, an onlooker from an opposite but generous point of view, who made no secret of his admiration, both for the work itself and its devout leader. "Only a few weeks before his lamented death," writes a correspondent in the *Westminster Gazette* (January 27, 1877), "Cardinal Wiseman expressed to us the warmest praise of the zeal and labours of the Anglican Monk Ignatius."

This quotation may be supplemented by the fact that the Reverend Father was received in private audience (at the Archbishop's house, York Place) by His Eminence, who asked him many kindly questions as to his own personal aspirations, and the ultimate object of a Revival so incongruous with the temperament of the Reformed Church. For more reasons than one, and especially when compared

with the policy employed by the Western Dynasty at that particular period, this interview was, to say the least—interesting! The Monk recalls it to this day in every detail, even to the trifling remembrance that while talking to him, His Eminence consumed a considerable quantity of sweetmeats from an enormous box on the table, and the more important item—that when giving his blessing, he was pleased to express regret on the score of so brilliant a labourer in the great vineyard having elected to make his heavenward journey *vid* Canterbury, instead of Rome.

All the same, the note of sympathy sounded in this historical visit was an oasis in the burning sands of misrepresentation and petty calumny, and its memory is one of the many Llanthony evergreens. If the aged Archbishop and the youthful Monk might not precisely clasp hands as fellow-Churchmen, they did so as brother-Christians, and joint believers in the same supreme Truths which bind all the Churches together into the one unanimous sheaf that has no need of earth-given name or sect.

The courteous reception of an Anglican Benedictine by a distinguished Papal delegate is by no means the only occasion when the Reverend Father has had reason to recognise the friendly shadow of St. Peter's Chair. A few pages later we shall record his memorable visit to the saintly Pio Nono, but at present, in the cause of continuity, mention may only be made of a significant correspondence and acquaintance established between Elm Hill Priory and the Roman Catholic Monastery of Charnwood, near Ashby-de-la-Zouche.

The name of Ambrose Phillips de Lisle is too well known as the arch-promoter of Roman Monachism in England, for it to be necessary to enlarge upon the fact. Charnwood Abbey, of which he was the lay Founder and Benefactor, is extant to this day, and represents the first, and one of the most important, Residences of enclosed Monks in the kingdom. It follows the primordial Benedictine Rule (restored by St. Bernard), together with the added Observances of Citeaux; the Choir Monks wearing

the white cowls and habits and black scapulars of the Cistercian Order, and the lay Brothers the appointed brown frocks.

It is not astonishing that the zealous leaders of two somewhat similar movements should be moved by a lively interest, not to say curiosity, in each other's work and personality, even though their parallel circumstances showed such evident disparity. Mr. de Lisle was a married secular, who elected, under the smile of his approving Church, to spend his riches in endowing a beautiful home of prayer and praise within a stone's throw of his own country-house. And for this good deed he experienced much spiritual consolation, a good deal of celebrity, and no end of pious petting from the Papal circle at large. The Monk Ignatius of Jesus, on the contrary, was a cloistered celibate, a man who himself lived the life he called on others to resurrect, and who begged his means of existence almost from hour to hour. Furthermore, the frown of his Pastors and Masters was perpetually upon him; so altogether the antithesis between the two exponents was wide and irrevocable.

Nevertheless, this very polarity was in itself magnetic, and when brought into contact sent forth great sparks of sympathy. Accepting an invitation from the courteous Founder of the British Mount St. Bernard, our Reverend Father made a pilgrimage from Norwich to Charnwood Forest, and was the guest of the Abbot at the Cistercian Monastery during a most agreeable and interesting stay within its walls. Nothing could have exceeded the kind and unqualified welcome accorded to the Anglican Benedictine by his Roman *confrère*. Far from being received as an outsider or interloper, every deference was conferred on him which befitted an honoured guest. He was placed beside the Abbot at the High Altar, given the stall next to him in choir, and censed immediately after him—three marks of distinction which in monastic etiquette mean much.

It would appear that these fraternal overtures on the

part of the white-robed Superior were not relished by the minor members of his Community, or at any rate by one good Brother in particular, to whom it gave positive scandal that a distinguished "heretic" should share the privileges of canonical precedence with his own orthodox Abbot. Holy obedience precluded the possibility of protest, but as by coincidence this very Novice was the one told off to attend on the person of the Monk-visitor, he lived in hopes of an opportunity arising wherein he might air his injured feelings, without transgressing Rule. It is only fair to explain that this zealous Brother was a recent importation to the Roman sheepfold, and that being a very new broom, his desire to sweep clean was a consequence common to that particular state of edification.

Next morning at 2 a.m., when this perturbed spirit came to conduct the Reverend Father to the Abbey church for Matins, he purposely ignored the way to the choir, and led him in triumph to the Strangers' Tribune—a gallery in which seculars were accommodated when permitted to be present at the Monastic Offices. The Cistercian Abbot, missing his guest in choir, naturally inquired why he was not present, whereupon the Novice had to own that he had taken him, together with several Roman priests who happened to be staying there, to the Visitors' Gallery—a piece of information which met with a severe reprimand. The next moment our Reverend Father was translated from banishment to the stall beside the courteous Abbot, who lost no time in apologising for his Brother's unpardonable mistake. "He is a convert, you know," he said, laughing, when referring again to the subject, "and they are often a little peculiar." Later on in the day, the Reverend Father, accompanied by the Superior and Father Collins (known in religion as Father Augustine), drove over to Mr. de Lisle's residence, and had a long and interesting talk with that sympathetic personality.

This visit to Mount St. Bernard was one of distinct refreshment to soul and body, and although of such brief duration, the Monk went back to his own strenuous labours

with a pleasant sense of fellowship hitherto unfelt. He had participated in the daily life of an Order which, like his own, retained its primitive rigour of Rule and Enclosure, and the experience had been full of instruction and encouragement.

Not the least important of the Charnwood memories is the presiding shadow of the Monastic Champion, Ambrose de Lisle himself—the man who, albeit a staunch Papist, could yet conceive for the Anglican Monk (his parallel and contrast) a cordial admiration and friendship which lasted out his life. Amongst the many unique budgets with which the Llanthony library abounds, none is more interesting than the fragmentary correspondence which from time to time was exchanged by these opposite representatives—the Monk and the Secular—both of them Founders of nineteenth-century monuments. Could I spin this biography *ad libitum*, one or two of these letters would certainly have been reproduced, but the copious number of events which surround this period and must be imperatively recorded, make all steps aside from the hard highway of narration most deeply to be regretted impossibilities.

It must have been a matter of weird comparison in the Reverend Father's mind, to have reviewed the calm, unmolested routine of monastic life at Charnwood Abbey, side by side with the limb-from-limb jeopardy in which his own efforts in an analogous direction were constantly placing his individual existence. Nevertheless, he went on his way undismayed, and inasmuch as to move the wheels of his Revival at all meant the expenditure of a great deal of money, these funds had to be raised by preaching and pleading his cause broadcast throughout the English provinces. So the odds had to be taken and the mobs faced, even though the result should mean death.

And very near to the Great Reaper indeed did his cry for Monasticism at times lead him. Everywhere crowds of rich and poor flocked to hear the great preacher, but it was the Monk element, breathing between the lines of his

discourses, which set the mobs thirsting for his life. His power had become a danger in the land, his voice a reveillé which it was inconvenient to recognise, so everywhere and on all sides there was a tacit desire to annihilate what could not be silenced, and kill what would never be subdued alive. Yet the Cause prospered, and the golden drops came trickling in, while everywhere friends rose up to prop and pillar the slender edifice that brick by brick was growing daily before the face of the country's Church.

It is but fair to reiterate that, so far as personal violence is concerned, the Reverend Father can only count his aggressors amongst fanatics of pugilistic spirituality, or poor ignorant hirelings, who, for a few pence and a glass of beer, would have been equally pleased to scatter his brains on the pavement, as to chair him round the town. Not until the famous Lombard Street riots of a later date, did the more enlightened section of the population ever degrade its nationality by taking part in these lynching parties, which very soon became the stereotyped conclusion to most of the Monk's orations. One may imagine that the very announcement of his approach must have meant a rally amongst the constabulary of the threatened locality, and as even from great and sublime causes the comic touch is seldom distant, it is no scant courtesy to our valuable and long-suffering police force to add that its manœuvres were sometimes original.

Just one instance. Those who remember the good old city of Bath in the mid-sixties, need not be reminded of what it was pleased to misname its "Evangelical" principles. As the impious historian, I may refer to it as a hotbed of Protestant Polemics, whose Evangelicalism, led by the famous Rev. Hobart Seymour, presented a lamentable misapprehension of the loving Gospel of Peace, by whose Light they professed to walk. At any rate (be the cause a thing unknown), the announcement that a Monk would plead Monks in the Public Hall of Bath, fell like a flaming brand on the sensibility, or highly dried faggots of popular prejudice. Curiosity prevailed over protest, and as

usual the Reverend Father addressed a gathering of several thousand souls, many of whom were already in sympathy with his cause, still more who became so, under the fire of his strange eloquence, and a dense background of heterogeneous rowdies crowded together for the laudable purpose of helping their friends outside to lay violent hands on a single defenceless man.

But the Bath Municipality must have had a genius in its midst, for its measures, if primitive, were masterly. As the preacher voiced his last phrase, a rush for the platform ensued. Zoological sounds arose from all parts of the building, and with a chorus of indescribable shouts and yells, the mob closed in round the Father on every side, thus cutting him off in a moment from retreat or escape. The crowning climax was, however, to come from the police! Without waiting to discover ringleaders or make a single arrest, they pushed their way in a compact body straight to the Monk's side, scattering all who opposed their march with the sight of their formidable truncheons. This much accomplished, the rest was easy but unexpected, no one being more thoroughly amazed than the Reverend Father himself. In the twinkling of an eye, three stalwart "bobbies" laid respectful but firm grip upon him, and the next instant he found himself being carried helplessly on their shoulders over heads of friends and foes, in the direction of the central exit. Other policemen walked on either side of the bearers, who, truncheon to the fore, swept a clear passage for their procession, the crowd falling back before a few telling raps from the clubs of the Defence.

Out of the hall marched this singular cortège, and right into the seething mass of humanity huddled in eager expectancy on every inch of foothold offered by steps, pavement, and a wide circuit of open thoroughfare. The effect of the apparition was prodigious, that of the truncheons still more so. With the wisdom of past experience, the police officers took advantage of the panic to make a quick march of the rest of their walk, and the hotel in which

the Monk was staying happening to be in close vicinity to the hall, they were able to make short work of the rescue, and set him in safety (and on his feet) within the doors of this hospitable shelter.

The next step was a preventive one. It was necessary to protect the hotel from bombardment, and for this end strong measures were in readiness, but never used. With the closing of the hotel doors the riot practically collapsed, and though a certain number of the roughs strove to keep the ball rolling, the sight of their captains encircled by the arm of the law taught them wisdom, and they likewise assumed the better part of valour, slinking discreetly out of radius of the deadly wooden staves.

This incident, to the reader at least, is more suggestive of humour than peril, but to the one who played "star" in the tableau, that strange ride home meant nothing less than a slip from the jaws of death. But for the timely intervention of the police at the crucial moment, a replica on a gigantic scale of the Ipswich "protest" would undoubtedly have taken place, and with a result which even the most earth-to-earth imagination could hardly fail to forecast.

If, however, in his provincial experiences, the Monk had to encounter the stubborn opposition of jealousy and party spirit, in Norwich itself he was fast sweeping all before him. Step by step, the changes which want of means had so long held in abeyance were being daily evolved. The Third Order had already risen to a numerous working body, and the enclosed Community being likewise considerably strengthened, the Church services which at the outset had suffered from the absolute dearth of appointments, were now rendered in a manner worthy of their sacred significance and tradition.

It had long since become necessary to enlarge their chapel, and for this purpose three rooms were sacrificed, their partition walls taken away, and the combined space seated with three hundred chairs—the utmost accommodation which could be contrived. The attempts at decoration were of course primitive, but, being executed under

the artistic eye of the Superior, the scheme, consisting chiefly of indefinite draperies, was wisely held within the minor key.

And here, in this improvised and unlovely little sanctuary, were celebrated the highest rites of a Church which since the sixteenth century had been denuded of her best adornment—the exquisite metaphor of devout ritual. This historical Restitution at the Monk's hands was complete as it was abrupt. The Revival was proclaimed in its entirety and practised in the self-same breath. In the Tabernacle dwelt the Eucharistic Presence, and before it hung the sentinel lamp which never sleeps. Banners, images, and devout pictures modified the bareness of the surrounding walls, and as a tribute to the Lesser Light of Heaven, the Virgin Mother's altar was restored to its long-forgotten or forbidden dignity. Shrines dedicated to St. Benedict, St. William the boy-martyr of Norwich, St. Dunstan, and other saints, were likewise prominent details of this Catholic resurrection, which can only be compared with an awakening from the unbroken sleep of nigh three hundred years.

The evolution of the Church's seasons was a special spur to the fearless zeal of the Norwich Monks. Faithful to ancient usage, these periods of Feast or Fast met with public recognition at their hands, and though at the outset some of these innovations—or rather renovations—may have raised the hair of the startled seculars, the logic and suggestive beauty of the observances soon levelled the barriers of apprehension, and brought even greater crowds than ever to participate in their solemnity. On Christmas Eve the Noel was celebrated by the singing of the Midnight Mass, and the erection of a Bethlehem (the Holy Family and Manger) in the Benedictine Chapel. The Bambino used in this very group is still preserved and venerated in the Abbot's cell at Llanthony, a much more artistic and costly model having since then been presented for use in the Abbey church.

On Ash Wednesday and during the Lenten Vigil the old-world Christian customs came eminently to the fore.

The midnight of Shrove Tuesday once rung, Solemn Silence was proclaimed in Community, and ashes were strewn broadcast in choir and church. The cross of ashes was traced on the heads of the faithful at the midday Office, and on the following Monday the altars and shrines were veiled and denuded of all ornament. On either side of the high altar two large pictures indicative of Eternity and Punishment were hung, the former represented by a life-sized skeleton, and the latter by a human figure depicted in the torments of hell-fire. So graphic and realistic are these pictures said to have been, that on first seeing them several of the congregation are reported to have shrieked aloud. At any rate they fulfilled their purpose as a powerful arrest to the unconverted, and an appropriate background to the course of vigorous Mission sermons preached by the Superior during that memorable Lent of 1864.

For Ascension Day in the same year—the Festival which to the Reverend Father is even now above all others—was reserved the supreme moment of the calendar. For the first time since the prohibitive knell of the Reformation was heard in the British Church, the Blessed Sacrament was carried in pious jubilee through the streets of Norwich, with bell, lights, and incense, and accompanied by a huge concourse of people (townsfolk of all denominations), besides Monks, Acolytes, and Third Order Brothers and Sisters. The Brothers bore an image of the Blessed Virgin in their midst, while the Sisters carried Her banner. One of the most beautiful features of the proceedings was the group of young girls dressed in white and blue, who scattered flowers in front of the glittering monstrance. It is stated by contemporary journalists that the blaze of light emanating from this historical cortège could be seen at a distance of four miles off.

Fearing a possible repetition of the former scenes of violence, the police insisted on flanking the procession on either side, but the precaution was not needed. Not so much as a breath was levelled against their progress. The

Sacred Host was borne by the Monastery chaplain under a canopy which numbered amongst its pole-bearers the well-known Father Grafton, afterwards Bishop of Fond du lac. The Superior himself took no active part in the proceedings, beyond walking beside the canopy and—keeping an eye upon the crowd. This last-named duty implied much more than it expressed. It meant an heroic concentration of psychic strength, a mighty diffusion of that nameless thrall by which this single presence was at times enabled to assert its sway over a human miscellany of class and creed that challenged for variety the fabulous sands of the shore.

The personal element in this suppression of public protest must have been obvious, to say the least; for on the Corpus Christi Festival of the same year, when a similar procession went forth, and the Reverend Father was prevented by illness from accompanying it, the cortège had hardly gone a hundred yards from the Monastery gates before it was so pitilessly mobbed that the bearer of the Blessed Sacrament (one of the priests from St. Barnabas, Pimlico) was forced to make a precipitate retreat with his sacred charge, in order to secure it from sacrilegious assault—whereas the Ascension Day procession was executed in perfect silence, and in the midst of a subdued decorum which it was edifying to witness. The Monk spoke not a word to the dense human wall which lined the route from end to end. He only made a sign, and at his uplifted hand, hats were raised, heads bowed, and many a stubborn knee bent to earth before the Jesus of Nazareth who passed by.

On St. Andrew's Plain, the most convenient point of their circuit, an altar of Repose had been erected, and here a pause was made, solemn Benediction being subsequently given before the march home was commenced. It was a glorious and incredible sight to see the shining monstrance raised towards the four quarters of the compass before breathless masses of the many denominations of Christianity in which the provincial heart of England so plentifully

abounds. From Roman Catholic to Wesleyan, High Churchman to Evangelical, they were all there as one voice, and joining irresistibly in the strange emotion of that ecstatic climax.

Here was a choice morsel indeed for the molars of the Church Press, an historical achievement on which clerical journalism might well fatten and grow sleek. "At the instigation of the notorious Superior of Elm Hill Priory, 'the Host' had been actually carried in broad daylight through the streets of Protestant Norwich," and the very audacity of the proceeding caused its publication to spread like wildfire throughout the land.

Meanwhile, at the Monastery itself, the leafage of green endeavour had broken into blossom, and the consummation of the fruit harvest was at hand—in the shape of souls. Many and pathetic were the conversions which crowned the efforts of the untiring Monk. It would be vain to set them in review, but one amongst the countless I am fain to disentangle—the story of a modern Magdalene, who was led to wash the feet of Jesus with her tears.

One early evening, just after the close of Benediction, a Brother came to the Reverend Father with a troubled face. "There is a woman asking for you at the grille," he said hesitatingly. "I have told her repeatedly that you never see any one at this hour, but she refuses to go away." Being at all times unwilling to repel even the very humblest among his fellows, the Superior's answer was to go in person to the grille and open it. A woman stood without—one of the many unfortunates on whom the virtuous and happy are apt to lavish too much blame and far too little pity—and at a glance the Monk knew that the Good Shepherd had been passing through the wilderness and had brought a wanderer home.

With her pale face pressed against the grating, the poor soul told her story—the old familiar story whose pathos is ineffable. She was a sinner. Step by step the degradation had been accomplished, and hunger of soul and body had spurred her to despair. But the Light had come

at last. That evening she had crept into the Monastery chapel, Benediction was going on as she entered, and at the Elevation, the Call had reached her to go and sin no more. It was all told in a few hurried whispers, and the poor woman's ignorance of creed and ritual gave her assertion a convincing reality that was almost startling. "*What* did they hold up, sir?" was her strange question, when she had told her story. "I don't know what it was, but it was *that* which changed me!" And the Monk answered, "*It was God!*"

The Reverend Father was at that time still a very young man, and his experience of this class of penitent had been small. He therefore looked upon the manipulation of such a case as a very heavy responsibility. Nevertheless, he assumed it manfully, trusting in the One who had directed the poor derelict to his door, to light him out of all perplexity on her behalf. For the moment he dismissed her with the message of pardon and peace sent to all "who truly repent and turn to Him," and a kindly invitation to return another day, if her contrition was really sincere. And return she did. There is no more golden record in these pages than the conversion of this Norwich Magdalene. Like most of her class, when once the redeeming hand reached her, she clasped it with a grateful fervency which many of her more fortunate sisters might have done well to imitate or invoke. Also be it said in her praise, that she possessed a degree of heroism of which few could boast.

There is no disguising the fact that, in his zeal to test the rock-foundation of his penitent's conversion, the measures employed by the Monk towards that intention were at once mediæval and drastic. He feared the presence of emotion versus devotion, and determined to thresh the matter beyond a doubt. "If you are truly desirous of forsaking your evil ways and leading a new life, are you willing, as proof of the same," said he, "to do public penance—such as I shall direct—before the face of all the congregation?" And the Magdalene answered, "Yes! She was only too thankful to do anything which could possibly be assigned her."

On the following Sunday, in accordance with the usage of moyenage tradition, a pathetic "reparation" was enacted in the chapel of Elm Hill Monastery. Clad in the penitential sheet, and carrying a sordid tallow candle, this valiant soul presented herself barefoot at the chapel door, drank a glass of water mingled with ashes in sight of the crowded congregation, and fulfilled every pitiless rite of an Ignatian version of a liturgical public penance according to the ancient practice of the Church. The brave composure with which she supported this humiliating ordeal could have been nothing less than an echo of the joy which the angels of God were surely experiencing at that moment over the one sinner who repented.

It is a lamentable statistic that many of the most heroic conversions are short-lived, therefore it is doubly delightful to be able to affirm that this poor woman lived to be a good Christian, and a useful and respectable citizen. The Reverend Father, once convinced of her sincerity, lost no time in completing her rescue both of soul and body. Added to his own ministrations and instructions, he interested kindly folk in her behalf, and as time went on she became a regular and devout participator in the privileges of the holy Sacraments.

In the Monk's Chapter Room at Llanthony a worn Family Bible is still in daily use—a gift which the Abbot received in the long-ago Norwich days from the hands of this very penitent. It was her father and mother's Book, she told him at the time, a relic of the dear old innocent home days before sorrow and sin had come upon her, and she had somehow always kept it, out of love. Now he must take it. It was all she had to give, it was her thank-offering for the Unspeakable Gift which but for him she would never have received. She would listen to no refusal, and so, to spare her pain, he took the Bible from her hands. It was her box of spikenard, and therefore very precious.

I must lighten this chapter with one comic flash, a single sample of the very radical measures which the Monk invariably employed for the edification or chastisement of

those with whom he had to deal. In matters spiritual or temporal his methods were equally primitive. His personal combat with the mighty Crinoline is in itself an achievement from which the playwright might gather a suggestive ear of corn.

For some time past the invasion of the voluminous steel petticoat of glorious memory had made considerable havoc in the Monastery church. Three hundred chairs for the use of three hundred people had been placed at the disposal of his congregation, but ever since the appearance of the inordinate hoop, only one-third of the number had been able to find accommodation, and that in a semi-asphyxiated condition, owing to the overpowering proximity of their neighbours' distended skirts. This ridiculous exhibition was neither convenient nor devotional. It meant crowds being turned away, and the stairs and passages being converted into competitive battlefields for tongues and toilettes seeking space and finding none. As a tentative experiment, the Superior was fain to hint delicately, while preaching, at the impossibility of permitting one lady to occupy three chairs in a chapel whose space at best was quite inadequate to the numbers of its congregation. He suavely suggested that those who felt constrained to adopt the fashionable girth should either purchase crinolines which could be collapsed at will like umbrellas, or else leave them at home altogether—perhaps the most satisfactory course of the two. But the courteous exhortation proved fruitless. The offending hoops both multiplied and magnified exceedingly, and the Reverend Father no longer felt any compunction in manipulating their suppression with a high hand.

For this purpose he sacrificed a small room not far from the chapel, let a carpenter loose in it, and instructed him to decorate its walls with a row of palpable pegs.

This done, he gave public notice that no lady wearing a crinoline would be admitted within the church; and further, that in order to modify this prohibition as much as possible, he had caused a toilette-room to be fitted up,

where members of the congregation could deposit their "steels" during service, and resume them before leaving the premises. For the benefit of those, he added with fine irony, who were incapable of independent adjustment, a Sister would be in attendance whose assistance might be solicited.

In ninety-nine cases out of a hundred, such an announcement would merely have emptied the church and raised a dust of feminine fury, but no such ebullition swamped the original edict of the plain-spoken Monk. My authority is a Norwich native, an extant Third Order Brother, who evidently had a sly peep into this chamber of metamorphosis when the ministering Sister's back was turned. "It was a queer sight," he said, laughing, when he confided to me his impression. "The pegs were full of crinolines of all sizes, colours, and descriptions, and in the church itself every woman looked as if she had just had the steam roller over her."

This is a ludicrous incident, and perhaps even an insignificant one, except in this respect, that it serves to show the peculiar personal sway which even in his young days the Reverend Father exercised over all—men, women, and children—who happened to fall under the shadow of his influence or jurisdiction.

CHAPTER XXIII

"THE LORD SENT THUNDER"

"'Mid stormiest seas I rest
Calmly on Jesus' Breast,
In Thy strong Ark so blest,
For Jesus rules the waves."

BUT for the stimulating spur of his spiritual director, it is doubtful whether the Catholicity of the Rev. Mr. Hillyard would ever have combined valour with discretion. He preferred the thin-ended wedge to a more summary policy, and was inclined to lament over the hideous cattle-pens—otherwise pews—which disfigured the aisles of his fine old church, rather than proceed to their immediate demolition. Local prejudice was at the core of this timidity, and in particular the ferocious conservatism of one of his churchwardens—a voluble gentleman in whose nostrils the merest whiff of ritual or innovation sent forth a brimstone stench.

Our Reverend Father, on the other hand, was a keen advocate of the neck-or-nothing plunge. Where upheaval was inevitable, he disdained to approach it with the step of Agag, it being in his opinion more honest to open fire with a round of artillery than with a few peas from a penny popgun. "Begin where you mean to end," was the maxim which he both preached and practised, "and don't budge for any one. If you intend to do away with your pews, have them knocked down to-night, and if not, leave them alone—but no half measures."

The Rector's position was not all honey. One of his two churchwardens sided openly with the energetic Monk, while the second would cheerfully have limbed him, had

hanging been out of date. Between these two fires, Mr. Hillyard's judgment simmered long and painfully, till finally in despair he threw up the game, and delegated the initiative to the master-spirit whom he knew would adjust the situation without reference to anything but his own conscience, and the weal of a sacred cause.

This *carte-blanche* once accorded, a climax was not long in following. Whether by connivance with the "Popishly"-inclined churchwarden, or from an impetus derived from the Superior's openly-expressed opinions on the subject, history appears to be somewhat ambiguous; but certain it is that in a single night St. Lawrence was quietly entered, and every pew under its roof reduced to firewood. By morning only the débris was to be seen—a spectacle which was eyed with stupefaction and a variety of other sensations by the rival factions of the parish parliament. As a matter of course, every one blamed, praised, or criticised the Monk. More than half the town applauded the proceeding, but a fiery residue remained to be appeased, and these, summoning to their side the sympathetic venom of every Protestant in the entire neighbourhood, took a deliberate vow to set fire to Elm Hill, and make a blaze of both Monkeny and Monks.

It took time to formulate this design, which to execute effectually would require numbers as well as zeal, but before many weeks were out, over three thousand souls were putting shoulder to the wheel destined to crush and deliberately destroy the life of one young and defenceless man. And but for the charge which God's angels kept over him, this murderous plot would most certainly have caused his death.

On St. Mark's Day, April 25, 1864, the first really Catholic Mass was celebrated at the Church of St. Lawrence, Norwich. Mr. Hillyard himself performed the Divine Office, vested in the priestly chasuble, and at an altar on which Crucifix, lights, and flowers were restored to their primitive positions. The church itself, which was now re-seated throughout with conventional and movable

chairs, literally teemed with worshippers, whose devotion it is to be feared must have been diluted by the apprehensive curiosity inseparable from so amazing a transformation. It may interest some to know that the chasuble worn by Mr. Hillyard to celebrate this memorable Mass is still in use at Llanthony Abbey, and treasured as a precious relic of those stormy Norwich days.

"I know I shall be stoned alive," said the Rector nervously, as he prepared to leave the sacristy and face the congregation; but the optimistic Monk was at his side exultant, and it was too late to show the white feather. "Nonsense!" was the Reverend Father's rejoinder to this depressing forecast. "If any stones are thrown, I will catch them for you, but there won't be one"—and his words proved true. The approval, or toleration, with which this great gathering followed the ritual of the elaborate service was positively heroic. It withstood the provocations of incense and genuflections with stoical composure; and even when, after the Elevation, the voice of the Superior (who was at the organ) rang out boldly in the Latin version of the "O Salutaris," not a stir took place, so thoroughly enthralled and carried away were one and all by the magnificent appeal of what they saw and heard.

To the Protestant mob, this barefaced exhibition of Popery was the last straw of insult flung upon an already burning pile of injury. That day, the Elm Hill Monks were mercilessly molested on their home journey from the "contaminated" church, but beyond the indulgence of a few more hoots and hisses than usual, the undercurrents of fury were pent up by the anticipation of an imminent and overwhelming revenge.

On the other hand, the antagonistic churchwarden was determined to declare instant war with the chief instigator of this abominable outrage, by placing an official veto, in his capacity of warden, on the Monks' admission within the church doors. Knowing the Episcopal ban under which the Superior had already been placed, this indignant personage felt sure of the Bishop's protection should he

address him a formal protest, and solicit a confirmation of his own deed of eviction. The news of this projected move on the part of the red-tape monster caused the Community at Elm Hill no little sorrow ; for, like their enemy, they also knew the throbbings of the Bishop's pulse, and realised the very moderate amount of cordiality with which his lordship was pleased to acknowledge the extraordinary propaganda of their work. Mr. Hillyard was powerless to avert the action of his elected church-official. Beyond expressing his opinion, which, to do him justice, he did with all due vehemence, he could only stand by and mark time. A churchwarden's position is an authoritative one, in the legal sense especially, and needless to say, the gentleman in question had an eye to his pound of flesh.

There was only one hope for the Monks—the resource of prayer—and towards this unfailing haven of strength and succour, every soul in the Community unfurled its sails and sped before the wind. This story is rich in wayside detail, but for sake of briefness we must pass to its conclusion—a remarkable one—which in the eyes of many may only point to coincidence, while to the few it will suggest the glimmer of what is beyond and above mere chance.

The angry churchwarden left no stone unturned to make his complaint to headquarters a speedy and formal one, and the rumour of his intention being the current topic in town, the Monks were warned by many friends of the cloud about to burst.

At length the day arrived when they knew that the morrow's Mass would probably be the last they would be permitted to hear in the church for which they had laboured so lovingly, and in whose behalf they had borne every species of minor torment to which humanity can be subjected. It was the eve of the churchwarden's triumph, and any moment might bring the prohibitive edict, by which the Monastery and its inhabitants would be legally debarred from entering St. Lawrence, even as passive members of its congregation. Nearly all that night the Superior and his Brothers were before the Reserved Sacra-

ment in their own chapel, keeping a ceaseless vigil of prayer for light and guidance in so dark an emergency; and when morning came (having received no Divine Intimation to do otherwise), they formed into their usual procession, and set forth for town to hear their early Mass. Those who have ever had a peep within cloister will know how utterly and entirely its inmates are removed from personal contact with the events of the hour that are rolling on outside, and even brushing by the bars of the bridge between the world and themselves—the grille. It was no wonder, then, that on stepping through their quaint old postern, the Monks were innocent as the unborn of the terrible occurrence which had taken place at dawn.

Only as they arrived nearer the heart of the city were they aware of anything amiss, and even then but a vague impression reached them that the streets were unusually quiet, though filled with people, and that all eyes were turned upon themselves with a look that meant awe and well-nigh fear. Farther on, in the direction of the church, the crowds were yet greater, and, to crown the mystery, the big bell of St. Lawrence began to toll the minute knell. The Superior sent one of the Brothers to inquire of a knot of men gathered at the corner of the street, what momentous event had taken place, and for whom the bell was tolling. His messenger came back to him pale and breathless. The news he had to tell was terrible—the churchwarden was dead!

In perfect health the night before, he had been seized towards dawn with no one knew what. Some called it sudden madness, others delirium, but its end was beyond conjecture, for it was death. With the words "Ignatius! Ignatius! Sign! Sign!" still upon his lips, he had died only an hour or two since, in a state of frenzy impossible to describe. His soul had been required of him! The weapons he had formed were not to prosper, and the hand about to wield them was laid low.

The passing of the Avenging Angel over Egypt could scarcely have produced a more widespread panic than did

the death of this one angry man in the startled town of Norwich.

All who know this city will remember that the Church of St. Lawrence is approached from the road by a descent down a flight of steps leading immediately into the south porch. On this particular morning, and long before the hour when the Monks were accustomed to put in an appearance, every square inch of step and adjacent thoroughfare was black with a swarm of horror-stricken humanity. It was an artist's study to look down into the porch, on the sea of faces waiting there—faces that one and all bore the touch of pallid, hushed expectancy. The silence of that multitude was something to be dreamed of afterwards, so strained was its tension, so painful, so intense. Not a breath stirred it, till the black habit and tonsured head of the Monk Ignatius came in sight, and then a sudden gust of movement—mute simultaneous movement—swept the crowd. Like a huge field of corn swaying to earth before the wind, every man, woman, and child fell kneeling at the feet of the man whom they had cursed and spit upon, yet in whose weak behalf they *felt* that Judgment had been passed. Death had stepped in betwixt him and them—and they knew it.

They kissed his hands, his feet, his clothing, each one struggling with his neighbour to obtain so much as a touch of the hem of his garments. It was nothing less than a psychological convulsion—this wave of passionate silence—one of those superb moments of dumb abandonment which sometimes enthuse even the dull, the unthinking, and the depraved.

From that date, there was no more talk of shutting the doors of St. Lawrence against the Elm Hill Monks, and with the exception of the most rabid of the professional religionists, who still nurtured and matured in secret their crusade of vengeance, the Reverend Father led the Norwich people with a light and silken string. Only eighteen months before, he had entered the city as an almost unknown and penniless man, now he was the leader of a practically national movement, and his hands held the wires

of a world of countless souls. Young and old, from highest to lowest, came to enlist under his banner, and as the months went by, the ranks of his Community were strengthened by a steady filtering in of cloister postulants, and innumerable applications for admission to the Third Order Congregation. A Guild dedicated to St. William of Norwich was in full swing for young lads and boys of the Elm Hill sheepfold; and a Sisterhood, christened the Sisters of Mount Calvary, was likewise in process of organisation, as a preliminary step towards the establishment of a Benedictine Convent, when times and means should favour such a possibility.

Two other contemporary signs of progress were the installation of a resident priest as Monastery chaplain, and the collection of funds sufficient to commence the building of a new church on the site of the Priory garden, for the convenience of the many hundreds who had to be turned away from every public service, for sheer lack of inches wherein to pack these long-suffering and persistent folk. This church was to be the monument of all sorts and conditions of offerings, from the £500 contributed by one Third Order Sister for the erection of the roof, to the many "mites" dropped in by loving hands who made their own little less, in order to have a part in the great beautiful shrine that was to be raised for the Master's service with the bricks and mortar of untold sacrifices.

The visit of Miss Sellon and Dr. Pusey to Norwich was likewise a significant landmark of this time. From afar, yet in intense spiritual sympathy, the Abbess Priscilla and the Father of Tractarianism had kept anxious watch over every deed and word which recorded a progressive footprint in the career that they had done so much to launch upon its deep waters. Miss Sellon took a house in the Cathedral Close, where she remained in person until the new Sisterhood was thoroughly floated, and the wheels of its organising machinery in perfect working order. Dr. Pusey's chief part in the proceedings was the rôle of Confessor, and general arbitrator in things personal and

spiritual ; but there is no doubt that a far deeper note than the “official” was sounded by the visit of these two celebrated personages to the son of their combined souls. It was a spontaneous and public tribute to the consummation of a mighty harvest—the seed-sowing of their own prayers and dreams, that had been reaped into an incarnate reality by the keen-edged sickle of the single-handed Monk. It has been argued that Father Ignatius, in more instances than one, was made the “cat’s paw of Puseyism” ; but I would venture to amend this assertion. The Monk of Llanthony was no instrument of the Tractarian upheaval, but simply one of its stupendous results. To the Alpha of the theoretical Pusey, his pupil has naturally supplied a sympathetic Omega ; but at this point the hand-in-glove affinity ends. Albeit “capitals” in the same great alphabet, their aims have been none the less independent, and their achievements wide apart.

If there was one luxury which brought jubilee to the Monks of Elm Hill, it was the revival of lapsed customs and traditions from the dust of sixteenth-century decay ; but it was not very often that opportunity offered for the gratification of these mediæval sentiments. Two occasions are nevertheless worth noting, of wafts from the Middle Ages which combined the causes of charity and devotion with suggestions of the picturesque. One was the offering of a little oblate child to the Order of St. Benedict—an ancient usage induced by piety or poverty, whereby mere babies could be dedicated to the service of God, by being adopted by a religious House, clothed in its habit, and in time (unless showing an unwilling disposition) professed as a vowed son of its cloister.

Among the Elm Hill disciples there happened to be a poor woman in whom the Superior was much interested. Her husband had abandoned her under peculiarly sad circumstances, and she was left absolutely penniless, with her little children, one of whom happened to be a boy of two years old. The Reverend Father, even at this early period of his life, was strangely susceptible to the winning

ways of childhood, and towards this poor little fellow in especial he felt himself irresistibly drawn. One thought led to another. He knew it would be pleasing to the Lord that a baby Samuel should be given to His Temple, and wholly in accordance with the monastic code that the Community should adopt an oblate in its midst. Added to this, it would be an act of Christian charity towards the poor overburdened mother to relieve her of at least one of her many loads; and as to himself, he felt it would be a pleasure and solace to have the patter of tiny feet about him, and a spotless soul which from the very dawn of its infant perceptions he might train and fashion from bud to blossom, as an oblate indeed of unsullied purity, and worthy to number among such as are of the Kingdom of Heaven.

A very pathetic little rite was enacted in the Priory chapel not long after the first flash of this charitable inspiration had taken place. The child's mother accepted the Reverend Father's offer of adoption with grateful confidence, and on an appointed day presented herself, together with a witness, at the Monastery altar, to deliver up her boy, body and soul (according to ancient ritual), to the Monks, who from henceforward were to be responsible for his nurture, education, and well-being. Together with a prescribed deed of gift duly signed and attested, the child was placed on the Holy Table by his mother, in token that her act of offering was personal and voluntary. This done, she drew back, and made way for the Superior, who forthwith took the little oblate in his arms, wrapped him in the white linen Communion cloth from the altar—a symbol of his own innocence—and finally carried him away into cloister.

At Holy Baptism this child had received from the Superior his own name in religion—Ignatius; and once admitted within Enclosure he was vested in the oblate's miniature white habit and sandals, in obedience to monastic precedent. (These first sandals are still carefully preserved at Llanthony amongst the Abbot's many treasures.) Later on in these pages, I shall have occasion to say more of the

baby Ignatius or "infant Samuel," as he was very generally called, but it may make this mention of him more complete if I now add that for over ten consecutive years this boy was the Reverend Father's incessant care and companion by night and by day, and that at the end of that time he repaid this outpouring of disinterested devotion in a way which somewhat undermines belief in the existence of so mythical a quality as gratitude, outside the four-footed creation.

A public pilgrimage in full feather to St. Walston's Well—a said-to-be miraculous source of water, four miles out of Norwich—was the second item I have referred to on the programme of old-world religious revivals. It was hundreds of years since a single pilgrim had dipped his cup into that long-forgotten spring, or breathed a prayer to its derelict Patron; so the occasion was an historical one, and worthy of the pageant with which it was commemorated by the Monks and their contingent. A party of over four hundred enthusiasts started out upon the expedition, including the Superior, his Community and Acolytes, and a long procession of Third Order Brothers and Sisters (carrying banners) bringing up the rear. Some of the wealthy members of the congregation followed in carriages, and a host of the poorer or more active brethren on foot. The crowd of pilgrims and spectators was so great that it moved as one long flexible column through the town. Many thought that it would be necessary to charter a special body of constables to check the traffic at the cross-roads, and avert the risk of accident to life and limb—but the Reverend Father would none of these precautions! He simply marshalled the assembled forces *in propria persona*, and—all went well.

The success of this pilgrimage was ideal! Not a *contretemps* occurred to give a jarring note to the day's devotion. Solemn service was held at the Well, which was beautifully decorated with lights and flowers, and before leaving, special prayers were offered for the sick amongst the congregation, and also on behalf of those whose

infirmities rendered them incapable of participating (except in spirit) in the benefits to be derived from this memorable walk of faith to the shrine of the neglected Saint. Many and various were the vials and vessels filled with the holy-well water, for future dissemination in home circles, and then, as the final note of glory, the return march was sounded, and towards evening the procession re-entered Norwich as it had left it—triumphant.

The dire offence and scandal which this daring deed afforded to the enemies of its perpetrators, threatened consequences of a most serious nature. A loud cry of "No Popery" now broke out for miles around. One day the Reverend Father received an anonymous letter telling him that at eight o'clock on a certain evening the Priory would be set on fire, together with all who happened to be within its precincts. This friendly threat he forthwith transmitted to the civil authorities, who seemed in no wise unprepared for the announcement. The Magistrates of the city, some of whom were the Reverend Father's greatest friends, in reply warned him that a mob of many thousands were collecting to attack and burn the Monastery, and that, although they would secrete a body of police in readiness in the adjacent houses, they feared an overwhelming outnumbering, and that a disaster would be inevitable. The news of the impending siege was soon an open secret. Mr. Hillyard was one of the first to arrive upon the scene, and settle himself down for the worst. "I have come to die with you," he said heroically, when he had expressed his unalterable resolution of staying "till the end." Soon after this pathetic effervescence had been chastened into a less acute stage, some ladies of the Third Order made their appearance—*armed*. In especial, says the Reverend Father, he remembers that Sisters Faith, Hope, and Charity distinguished themselves by characteristic and truly beautiful displays of individual courage and strategy.

Sister Faith, a very ladylike and delicate personality, brought a weapon from the spiritual armoury—her rosary; while Sister Hope, a somewhat more robust but no less

valuable supporter, carried in ambush a magnificent rolling-pin. But to Sister Charity was left the consummate touch of all. Under her cloak she bore an apparently innocent kettle, filled with *vitriol*! These are only a few among the many features of a general and plucky rush to the rescue. The Superior may have been all and everything that the black-fleeced among his Norwich flock are reported to have affirmed him to be, but inference points strongly in a gentler direction; for when the tug of war was actually at pulling-point, and the shadow of Death hanging black and imminent over the Priory, not so much as the smallest member of St. William's Guild stayed away, or "funked" the crisis. One and all, men, women, and children, rallied round their chief, and were ready to lay down their lives in his defence.

When the bell for Compline sounded on that eventful evening, the Elm Hill Community, with the exception of the Superior, presented an introspective picture of thrill and fearful expectancy. The Brothers entreated their Father to hide the Blessed Sacrament, and so ensure Its security from sacrilege or insult—but he would not. "They were all," he said, "himself included, far too wicked to die the death of saints, and they might be quite certain they would not get the chance."

And as night came on, detachments of police began to arrive in the neighbourhood, and were stationed in the houses nearest the Priory, to be in readiness should the preconcerted signal be sounded for a sortie. About the approaches to the Monastery, a few scattered outposts were on duty; but it was within the church and courtyard that the crowd of defenders was in fullest force. From the onlooker's focus the congregation must most assuredly have suggested the grotesque as well as the intrepid. Not more heterogeneous was the gathering of warriors than the display of their individual weapons. Arms, hostile and domestic, were to be seen on every hand, and it was clear that a prevalent heroism "to do or die" had been the leading motive of that valiant muster.

The Superior would hear of no relaxation of the daily Offices in consideration of the deadly peril which was said to be so near at hand. He would take no precautions against surprise, nor permit the slightest token of agitation to touch the monotony of the everyday routine. As the procession for Compline filed in from Enclosure according to its wont, no outsider who had not actually caught a glimpse of the troubled faces under the low-drawn hoods, would have imagined that beneath this decorous exterior the poor Brothers carried the conviction that they were wending their way to choir for the last time on earth.

Our Reverend Father, on this occasion, occupied his favourite post, at the organ. It was a sultry summer twilight, and all available windows being thrown open, every breath of sound from without was borne in to the anxious listeners, who tried in vain to fix their thoughts on the prayers they were reciting, instead of starting up in an agony at every stir or distant murmur which might be construed into the advance of an angry multitude.

The Office was nearing completion, and a wave of comfortable reassurance just beginning to exhale its atmosphere over the congregation, when a far-away chorus of many voices suddenly brought the whole assembly to its feet. The Reverend Father had been the first to catch the echo. He had just given out the Chant to the 91st Psalm, when the sound reached him, and to the accompaniment of this ominous *sotto voce*, he led off the singing with a vigour and complacency which many sought to emulate by the spasmodic rendering of quavering responses. It was useless to disguise the fact—a tragedy was about to be enacted; and it speaks volumes for the grit of that miscellaneous handful of humanity, that not one of them sought to save his own skin, and even among the more emotional woman-kind, the propensity to faint or scream was severely laid aside.

Some of those who formed part of that plucky congregation have told me they will never forget the horror of the experience. Within the church, a packed mass of terrified

men and women—a very death-trap full of victims—and outside, the steady roar of sound, that seemed like the fury of a rising sea, or the swarming up of countless devils let loose from hell to desolate the earth. The clamour was still distant, but each moment brought it nearer, now with a rush of hoots and yells, then again a lull, and some low, deep notes, like the growl of beasts at bay.

Every nerve was strained to highest tension! From one moment to another, the expectant - to - be - martyrs awaited the consummation of their destiny by the smashing in of windows or the battering down of doors at the hands of an infuriated mob. But an unforeseen thing happened, a phenomenon for which no one was prepared. The Finger of God parted the waters of difficulty from the right hand to the left, and, like Israel of old, the little company in the Elm Hill chapel passed over to dry land in thanksgiving and security. Suddenly and without warning, an almighty flash of forked lightning smote the gloaming in the dusky sanctuary. It sped, like a tongue of fire, over the heads of the terrified watchers, rested an instant at the Feet of the altar Crucifix, and then with a dazzling burst of glory, died out as it had come, swiftly and fearfully—and a darkness gathered that might indeed be felt. The warfare of Heaven was hurled upon Norwich that night. For hour upon hour mighty peals of thunder shook the city like shocks of earthquake or the bombardment of giant shells. The gates of the floods were thrown wide, deluges of hail and rain rushed like rivers in the streets and lanes, drenching and literally blinding all who strove to brave their blight. It was the wildest storm the townsfolk could remember, and its memory still lives in many a local diary.

Elm Hill Priory being situated on the top of a considerable ascent, it may be imagined that it was exposed to the teeth of the blast, and that on this particular occasion the ravages wrought on chimneys, bricks and mortar, etc., must have been many and dire, but by merciful Interposition such a calamity was turned aside. In this little Ark

of refuge all was Prayer and Peace, and the White Bird had already carried the olive-token to the souls of the persecuted Monks. God's thunderbolts had turned back the mob of incendiaries even at their very gates, and the sound of His many waters had scattered them terror-stricken and impotent like chaff before the wind. In the very scarlet of their sin they had been snatched back and given the light, whereby, later on, they would kneel and thank God that they had been fools, but not murderers.

When the storm was at length over, and the congregation prepared to betake themselves and their unused weapons to their respective homes, the whole town suggested the metaphor of a tear-stained sleeping face. Nature seemed still to be heaving a few final sobs, but for the rest, little else was stirring but the fall of the gentle after-rain, and the rush of the great black thunder-clouds, hurrying back to their terrible arsenals.

This was the last attempt made by the Protestant rabble to set fire to the Monastery. They gave up the job as a bad one, and contented themselves with less dangerous games. As a worthy policeman remarked who had the misfortune of being on duty that stormy evening, and was therefore qualified to give an opinion, "Any one could see that the Almighty had taken up them Monks."

CHAPTER XXIV

"WHEN THOU WALKEST THROUGH THE FIRE"

"From fire of sin, from flames of Hell,
The Mighty Blood can save;
Then sound the war-cry, sound it well,
Salvation's ensign wave."

ONE day, shortly after noon, the Superior was seated in his own room trying to wade through an unusual overflow of letters which that morning's mail had brought in. He was feeling what is familiarly known as "rushed," and was therefore in no predisposed condition to reflect upon the psychological side of life, still less to desire to be called from his writing-table to play lead in a very perilous and inexplicable mystery. It was the Monastery dinner-hour, and the Community, with the exception of the Reverend Father, who was too busy to leave his letters, were assembled in the Refectory, according to their Rule. The Superior's study was a quiet upper chamber where he could write or transact business undisturbed by the perpetual domestic sounds which even in a monastic household are sources of distraction to weary brains and nerves. Here, on this particular noonday, he was seated, surrounded by a sea of papers, and in no mood to stir or tolerate interruption for an hour or so to come.

Suddenly, however, and in the midst of a most important letter, he felt himself called by the Voice of his soul—the Voice that had no utterance and yet delivered its strange messages through the intermediary of irresistible inward impulse. "Go down instantly to the chapel," were the words which roused him from his occupation, and though with his outward ears he did not actually hear them, he felt their

sense go vibrating from wire to wire of his whole being. The shock was so unexpected, and the hindrance it implied to his work so unwelcome, that at first he was inclined to favour the plea of an overstrung imagination, and to bury himself in his correspondence without further heed. But this was not to be! Every time he strove to put pen to paper the command was repeated—"Go down to the chapel instantly"; and the more he tried to combat the impression, the more urgent it became.

The Reverend Father tells me that it was more in a spirit of thoroughly human vexation than anything approaching inspiration that he at length realised the folly of resistance, and resolved to go and see what his Lord required of him. Laying aside his pen with a hearty sigh, he left the room, hurried downstairs, and, opening the closed door of the chapel, went in. Then he knew why he had been called, and reproached himself sincerely for not having sooner obeyed the Voice of a timely and most merciful warning. The chapel was on fire! Flames averaging from one to four, and even five feet in height, were bursting out from the back of the reredos—a vacant space (originally a small room) then used as a temporary Monks' Choir. In another few moments the entire Monastery would be in a hopeless state of conflagration, and there was no help near! The Brothers were all in the Refectory at another end of the building; and out in what had been the garden, some workmen were busy at the foundations of the new Priory Church. Near at hand, within sight or sound, there was no one, not a soul—and the flames were making way every instant.

All these reflections and many others went flashing lightning-like through the Monk's brain. What could he do single-handed to save his Brothers, his Monastery, his earthly all? And the answer came clear and persistent, even before these thoughts had taken shape—"Put out the flames!" That was all, and in the anguish of his heart he cried aloud, "Lord, I cannot! How, and with what, should I put out these flames?" Once again the same solemn charge was reiterated, but with this addition, "Go forward!

Make the sign of the Cross! Go forward!"—and then—there was silence in his soul. The Voice spoke no more, and the fire spread apace.

The quality of irresolution has never been one of the Reverend Father's characteristics, and on this occasion he had braced himself to the emergency not only instantly, but in a way which few would have dared attempt. Resolved on blind obedience to a superhuman direction, he signed himself devoutly, and without more ado walked desperately into the midst of the flames.

What followed, even the most colossal pen would be weak to express. There are some things which to be understood must have been actually seen or felt, and this is one of them. Letterpress is a poor medium for convincing an unbelieving world of that which sounds like a breath from the mouldy folios of mediæval legend-lore, rather than what it is—a prodigious fact, related by the man to whom it happened, himself being a living and unimpeachable personality.

Deep into the very heart of the fire went the bidden Monk, and at his touch the flames sank before him! Signing his Master's Cross to right and left, he literally trod into the blazing sea that covered the stretch of cocoanut-matting with which the choir floor was carpeted. These flames, says the Reverend Father, had almost a supernatural flare about them. They had none of the red glow or heavy smoke of an ordinary incendiary, but were pale-coloured and bluish, like those produced by the igniting of some spirituous substance. Their heat was nevertheless intolerable, and it was into an absolute furnace of living martyrdom that he plunged headlong, in obedience to what he knew to be a Heaven-sent message. The movement was so rapid, so reckless, that it deadened sensation. When the Monk was able to take breath and realise his personal danger, miracle upon miracle had already been wrought. The tongues of fire were subservient to his will, and at the uplifting of his hand they sank and flickered, then suddenly died out in nothingness.

He was standing alone and unscathed in the silent choir, his senses strained and startled as those of one wakened roughly from a sleep of dreams. Involuntarily his fingers were still raised to trace the sacred symbol, and he looked around him with the strange, almost automatic precision which is so frequent a feature of overwhelming nerve reaction. From the tabernacle to the altar, its linen and furniture, and from thence to the time-worn woodwork on every side—the ready-made fuel for a monster pile—did his eyes wander. The sight was incredible! They were all intact! Then he passed his hands over his own face, his tonsure, habit, and sandals. Not so much as an eyelash singed or a foot scorched; and as to his clothing, it had not even the smell of burning between its folds.

The reredos, too! This was the crowning miracle! Not a trace of the fire was to be seen. He searched in vain for smouldering wreckage, or the dreadful black smear which invariably marks the trail of the passage of flame, but not a sign could he detect. Everything was in its place and the atmosphere normal. Only two small witnesses—very curious ones—were left to testify to the undoubted reality of the consuming properties of these extraordinary flames. At the back of the altar, exactly behind the tabernacle, were deposited two neat heaps of ashes, which on closer inspection proved to be the charred remains of a pair of dusters that the Brother Sacristan had evidently forgotten to remove after completing his work that morning. These ashes were gathered up into two symmetrical little mounds, and deposited side by side in a manner which suggested dexterity as well as mystery on the part of the unseen operator.

The Reverend Father, while gratefully recognising the intervention of God's saving Hand in this hour of extreme peril and perplexity, nevertheless inclines to the belief that the creation of the fire itself was not the handiwork of angels or their King. Looking back into the life of St. Benedict by St. Gregory the Great (chapter xx.), we find

that one of what he terms "these fantastical fires" was permitted to appear likewise to the Abbot Father of the Order, though under different and less dangerous circumstances. St. Benedict attributed these phenomena to demoniacal malice—an opinion which his successor at Elm Hill feels justified in endorsing, not only under the authoritative wing of the Saint of Nursia, but also for the reason that it was in this very same spot (the Monks' Choir of the Priory Church) that a few months later he actually met face to face one of those malignant beings, who for want of a more expressive name we call at random—devil, demon, or evil spirit.

Not only at Norwich has the Monk been called by the Inward Voice to rescue his altar from the raid of fire. During the earlier days of Llanthony he was one night suddenly awakened by a similar summons. It was winter-time, and the Christmas decorations were still about the chapel—a circumstance which rendered the havoc of flames especially easy and disastrous. This terrible reflection, added to a strange certainty that he would find the place on fire, caused him to leave his cell at once and see what was amiss. The Voice had only bidden him "go quickly into choir," but with natural premonition he interpreted the rest, and none too soon. A wreath of leaves which hung over the tabernacle was alight and blazing. If he had come a moment later, considerable damage must already have been done, let alone the risk of the flames spreading beyond control, and the beautiful Monastery being burnt to the ground, before help could be obtained. As it was, he was able to crush the burning leaves in his hands, tear down the entire wreath and tread it out beneath his feet till the last spark was extinct. Some of these charred leaves the Reverend Father has shown me carefully preserved among his many treasures, as tokens of thanksgiving for a narrow and most merciful escape.

The Llanthony fire, be it clearly understood, presented none of the supernormal suggestions of its Norwich parallel, beyond the fact that the Monk was distinctly

moved by the Spirit to rise from his bed and hasten to the chapel. The fire itself was doubtless owing to the reckless nearness of the leaves to the altar lights, and its appearance, odour, and general atmosphere were simply circumstantial, neither more nor less. It has always been, and still is, a custom at Llanthony (in pursuance of a special precedent) to leave two votive lights burning night and day upon the altars of the Blessed Sacrament and Our Lady, on the Vigil, and three days succeeding, every Principal Double in the British Calendar—hence, without doubt, the origin and cause of this occurrence. But to return once again to Elm Hill!

No sooner had the Superior satisfied himself that all danger was over, and that no sign of spark or smoulder could be lurking in any corner of the church, than he went to tell his tale of wonder to the members of his Community. The Brothers were still at their dinner when he entered the Refectory, and their astonishment (though monastically repressed) must have been great when they were told to approach one by one and define the nature of the smell that might be lingering about the habit and scapular of the Founder of their Order. First one Brother knelt and opined, then a second and a third, until all had successively tested their olfactory powers—with the same result. There was no odour whatsoever to be discovered, beyond the faint waft of black dye which clings to all materials woven with that sombre-coloured wool. Nothing more, absolutely nothing. And then only did the Monk tell them that he had walked through flames, extinguished them single-handed by the signing of the Holy Cross, and come out of the ordeal unhurt by so much as a hair of his head, in the strength of the Mighty One made perfect, by his own individual weakness.

Then he despatched a Brother to the garden, gathered the workmen round him, and made them likewise participators in the extraordinary events and privileges that the day had brought forth. A few minutes later, solemn thanksgiving was offered by the Superior in the Monastery

Chapel—a memorable *Te Deum* that was heartily sung by every soul under the Priory roof, including all the Brothers, and even the builders, who left their work in order to join the chorus of this spontaneous hymn of praise.

So many important events are crowded into these stormy Norwich chronicles, that their array is positively overwhelming. Even when the biographer's sieve has been brought into inexorable play, the residue of material would alone fill a hundred pages, and for the sake of concentration it is necessary somewhat to sacrifice minute continuity for the broader lines of an approximate summary.

Amongst the different breaks which at irregular intervals crossed the later period of the Monk's occupation of Elm Hill Priory, Missions preached here and there in the busy English capitals formed the staple item of an incessant programme of work and wear. He could seldom be induced to take a holiday, even of the shortest possible duration, and indeed during an interim which covered over three years only one little flash of rest—real typical rest—seems to present itself for record. This was a summer outing of some very few days' duration—a visit to Dr. Pusey and the Lady Abbess at the Priory Ascot. It was in the hayfields skirting the high road that most of their time was passed. All three were workers, weary hard-pressed workers, and each in his or her way appreciated the freedom of an hour or two passed in the peaceful seclusion of the country fields. Little did the passers-by, either on foot or exalted to the distinction of the mighty carriage, think that behind the simple hedgerow which divided the much-frequented highway from peaceful harvest-land, three well-known personalities and popular targets for the combined archery of criticism and ill-nature were quietly seated, enjoying the warm air and sunshine, and indulging in an intermittent exchange of thoughts on subjects of pre-occupation to all and each.

They were three historical figures that peopled this homely group. The Abbess Priscilla, an invalid as usual, stretched upon her couch, and far more mindful of her

responsibilities as a spiritual mother of many daughters, than of the crude simplicity of her own toilette; and at her side, upon the ground, the Monk Ignatius, whose outer man needs no description, saving the parenthesis that his neat and clean appearance supplied an all but comical set-off to his companions' unsophisticated *négligé*. Dr. Pusey himself completed the picture, attired in what the Reverend Father calls a short "swallow-tail" coat, and other garments of an equally unclerical and original cut.

From his ambush behind the friendly hedge, the Monk could listen to the wheels and footsteps passing to and fro upon the road, with the ear of a philosopher; but it was not long before a humorous element in the situation mingled with his graver reflections, and he was fain to impart his fancy and make the laugh go round. "What would those dear good passers-by feel," he said to Dr. Pusey, "if they knew that the head of the Puseyites was within a few inches of them, together with the terrible Abbess, and a real live Monk? What a dreadful combination we must be!"

The words were uttered in joke, nevertheless they voiced the upshot of public opinion. This trio, both severally and in conjunction, *was* "dreadful," inasmuch as it was irrepressible, and the sense of power always implies unease. It also invariably provokes a bleak blast of injustice from those who attempt to kick against its pricks. Dr. Pusey is a case in point. If there were two words in the vernacular that he most thoroughly detested, they were the terms "Puseyite" and "Puseyism," which from force of habit the public bill-sticker had pasted indiscriminately on all sorts of adventurous Ritualism, whether good, bad, or a little worse than indifferent.

"For goodness' sake, Father Ignatius," he replied irritably, "don't call me anything so objectionable. Who are the *Puseyites*, I should like to know?" And this harmless little banter on the part of the Monk seemed to set quite a ripple stirring over the calm of that afternoon pastorate.

"There never was a greater mistake," says the Reverend Father, "than to call Dr. Pusey the leader of the Ritualistic

party, as his enemies, and even many of his friends, are so fond of doing. He was not a Ritualist at all, and no one is better able to affirm this fact than myself, who knew him intimately, and had the privilege of his spiritual guidance up to the year before his death. Dr. Pusey was a Tractarian, not a Ritualist. Ritualism is undoubtedly in part the outcome of the Tractarian Movement, but it is a sequel of the real Puseyism, an offshoot, and in no wise the trunk of the mother tree. The aim of Tractarianism was to restore the Sacraments to their original and unfortunately lapsed dignity in the National Church. The resurrection of Form and Ceremony was altogether a separate development. Ritualism is a beautiful and elaborate afterthought, and in a great measure the consequence of so-called 'Puseyism,' but it is most distinctly not the synonym that the outsider would have us believe. Dr. Pusey was the last man in the world to tolerate a superfluity of the outward and visible sign. As to being a Ritualist himself, he was an emphatic antithesis. All the years that I knew him I never saw him 'vested' in so much as a cassock. A dirty old surplice worn over a pair of equally superannuated trousers formed the loudest note of personal Ritualism to which he ever aspired. In lieu of stole, he was wont to wind a piece of crape round his neck—crape that was not only limp and dragged, but positively snuff-coloured from wear and antiquity. If ever there was an out-and-out saint of God, Dr. Pusey was that man; but much as I loved and venerated him, I was often tempted to lay coercive hands upon him, and give him a good brush-up."

I must now give my public the benefit of a quaint episode, and an important one, occurring in the Norwich folios of the Reverend Father's diary. It is, however, from a kindly eye-witness, one indeed who played a brisk little rôle in the disturbance, that I have gleaned the most topical of the details I am about to relate. This volume purposes to be a biography, not an apotheosis, therefore even if the Monk's mediæval propensities sometimes sought

expansion in spiritual autocracy of a somewhat original kind, it is no injustice to him to cite one or two instances of a characteristic determination to carry by storm what he failed to obtain by less drastic measures. It is also a curious study to note the final acquiescence which he always managed to obtain, even when his edicts assumed a truly Spartan austerity, and obedience was left wholly to the discretion of the arraigned.

Earlier in these pages I have already mentioned that St. Andrew's Hall (once the Church of the Black Friars of Norwich) stood over against Elm Hill Priory, also that on occasion it was to be hired for public functions, concerts, balls, etc. Needless to say, such a state of things spelt impious sacrilege in the eyes of the orthodox Benedictine. It was a tacit and foregone conclusion that no member of the Monastery congregation would be permitted by the Superior to take part in these entertainments, or even to be present at such, on pain of dismissal from the Priory Church. There came a time, however, when this prohibition was set aside under the fiery temptation of a specially seductive ball.

To make a long story short, not only a goodly few of the Third Order Brothers and Sisters arranged to attend this festivity, but likewise the Rector of St. Lawrence, and with him of all people, the Monastery Chaplain—of course not a Monk, but none the less an Associate-Priest of the Order. The rumour of this intended ball having reached the Superior's ears, he announced publicly that any one of his flock who should commit the sin of assisting to desecrate the former house of God by degrading it into a common dancing-hall would be forthwith forbidden to re-enter within the Priory precincts, excommunicated in fact from the Monastery altar.

Nevertheless, when the date came round, there were those who persisted in being perverse, and to the ball they went, hoping no doubt either to circumvent the Monk's vigilance, or to be able to convince him of the innocence of their intention. The dancing and fun were just at their

height, when a Brother from the monastic "next door" stepped suddenly into the midst of the assembly—the bearer of a message from his Superior. "If any Third Order Brothers and Sisters were present," said he, "they were to leave instantly," and with that he noted the names of the delinquents, and withdrew. For a moment consternation was paramount, but the whirl of the dance and the exhilaration of the music told heavily in the balance, and very soon they were all pointing "the light fantastic" as cheerily as ever, and the warning was forgotten, like a cloud that has passed behind the hills. Even the Chaplain thought "he would just have another dance," and his example turned the scales. Those who felt uneasy became comforted, and the lady with whom he was dancing (a Third Order Sister, and to this day one of the Father's valued friends) took courage a hundredfold. She was even heard to remark that "as the Chaplain remained, *she* had no hesitation in doing likewise," etc. etc., and thus the night passed. Like all things in this world, the ball was over at last, and with the morning cool reflection came, a species of introspective exercise which in some cases, and especially that of the Chaplain, proved to be depressing.

The following Sunday, with faces that strove to be brazen but failed ingloriously, the delinquents put in their usual appearance at the public service. They knew perfectly well that some form of rod in pickle was being reserved in their intention, but of its exact nature they happily little dreamed. It must not be imagined that these guilty consciences were the portion of the poorer section of the Elm Hill congregation. The ball in question had been the smartest entertainment of the season, and its patrons and patronesses naturally included the local flower of Society, Fashion, Cash, and, whatever other elements go to make the sum-total of a successful public crush. It is probable that the black sheep on this occasion being for the most part gathered from rich or influential pastures, they indulged in the comfortable surmise that rather than

risk giving offence in moneyed quarters, the Monk would forget his displeasure for the sake of the chinks. But they had yet to learn with whom they had to deal.

Sunday was always a crowded day at Elm Hill Church, especially at the hour of the noontide Mass, therefore it was Sunday that the Reverend Father selected for the purpose he had in view. Midway in the morning service, and without warning, he suddenly broke the thread of the solemn ceremonies, and, standing on the altar step, began to read a list of names which sent the hearts of their owners up into their mouths, or perhaps in the most timid cases down headlong into the lowest recesses of their boots and shoes. This terribly personal index completed, each individual upon the register was requested to come forward into the chancel and stand before him—an invitation which none saw fit to evade.

The *tableau vivant* presented by this original but impressive tribunal must have been a remarkable one. It paled, however, into feebleness before the many-coloured consternation which the Superior's next words called forth. Addressing the guilty throng—a representative cluster of varieties both in age and condition—he dwelt briefly but sternly on their sin of premeditated sacrilege, committed in the face of Divine prohibition, and with the full knowledge of their liabilities as Christians should they persist in defying God through the intermediary of His minister—himself. This sin had been obdurately consummated, and its pardon was only with the Merciful. Nevertheless, it was his own duty, as their spiritual Superior and Father, to demand satisfaction of them in the name of Him whose house they had so grievously dishonoured. Ecclesiastical precedent pointed to excommunication as the penalty befitting sacrilegious offences, and although the Priory Chapel was not a parish church, neither did he himself hold Priest's Orders, he was speaking from an extra-diocesan altar as the Superior of an independent congregation, and with the authority of a messenger from God. Of two alternatives, those standing before him must now make choice. Either

they would be forthwith excommunicated from the Monastery Church, forbidden to re-enter it on pain of instant expulsion, or they would make reparation by performing public penance that same day, in such a manner as he should dictate.

This penance, divided into three sections, was prescribed as follows. During some appointed portion of Vespers, the female penitents were to lie prostrate in ashes on the chapel floor; and the elder men were to present themselves before the congregation carrying in their right hands that pungent species of degraded candle known in vulgar parlance as the tallow "dip." Younger members of the male persuasion—those who by help of a little imagination might still be called boys—were each to receive so many strokes of the rod of chastisement, administered on the altar step by the hands of the Superior.

The stupefaction which this startling edict produced upon those it concerned baffles expression. No one had been prepared for such a climax, and the sensation that followed the close of the Superior's address was something quite new to humanity. No one knew whether to laugh or cry, and among the men anger and astonishment ran a very even race. But they all knew it was useless to appeal. Either they must submit to a hateful humiliation in sight of the whole town, or never again show their faces within the doors of their beloved church.

Amongst the few protests which reached the Reverend Father during the early afternoon was one from a well-known Norwich official, and the Monk's devoted friend, who in a moment of unorthodox leniency had permitted his wife, son, and daughter to be present at the ball. This letter would have been excruciatingly funny had it not been for the pathos between the lines. "He was terribly distressed," said the writer, "and could assure the Reverend Father that all three of his family were only too ready to deplore what they had done, but his own position in the matter was most delicate. How could he permit his wife and daughter to lie publicly on cinders, and his son to be ignominiously

flogged? The thing was impossible, and he could not and would not countenance it, not for any man on earth—even the Reverend Father himself . . .” and a great deal more in a similar key. Then came the gist of the appeal. “For the sake of friendship, would not the Superior make an exception in their favour?”

But the answer was inexorable! It would not be just, said the Monk, to comply with his request. They must choose between the ashes and tallow candles or banishment from the Priory Church. Some of my readers may raise their eyebrows when I record the fact, that rather than be expelled from the Benedictine Chapel and the direction of the uncompromising Superior, all three of this family trio, mother, son, and daughter, duly presented themselves that evening at Vespers, and accomplished with the best grace possible the uncomfortable conditions of their trying public ordeal.

The scene in the church was unique. Being an occasion of self-abasement and penitence, it would be hardly delicate to describe it in detail, but I may at least affirm without indiscretion that with marvellously few exceptions (considering the circumstances) the plucky degenerates came forward *en masse* and submitted heroically to their humiliation or flagellation as the case might be. Not all the incense in the swinging censer could quell the horrible flare and perfume rising from those tallow candles, not even the most ascetic mind remain impervious to the incongruous but salutary contrast afforded by the flutter of silken skirts and furbelows and the ominous scrunching of the ashes during that most strange yet solemn prostration of some ten minutes' duration. The Reverend Father tells me that long before his wielding of the rod was over, his arm was tired out. At the eleventh hour one or two of the younger lads tried to slink out or shirk their chastisement by hiding behind others, but the Superior was too many for them. No one and nothing seemed to escape his eye. Those who were only frightened he led with a fatherly hand to their punishment, but others who were determined

to resist he expelled then and there. The whole episode was worked systematically, and with such unerring justice, that even if, in the opinion of some, it was an exercise of terrible severity, it had also a superb side.

Amongst those who absolutely refused to submit to public penance was the Rev. Mr. Hillyard. Preferring to accept what he considered the more dignified alternative of excommunication from the Benedictine altar, he declined the palliative kitchen dip, and allowed himself to be severed from all connection with the Monks and their Monastery. This sudden and sad ending to what had been so sincere and spiritual a friendship caused the Reverend Father some dark hours of real personal grief, but he would not surrender one iota of what he felt to be his duty. The Rector's attitude was not altogether a surprise to him. For some little time past the Rectory had opened its doors to a circle of young people, who, although delightful companions and probably perfectly innocent ones too (according to their own light), were not exactly of the category calculated to deepen or illuminate the susceptibility of the Christian conscience. Not only did they persuade Mr. Hillyard to attend the ball in person, but actually induced him to allow circulars announcing the entertainment to be given away in his church.

The “break” between Elm Hill Priory and St. Lawrence naturally meant the total cessation of the Monks' attendance at a church owned by an excommunicant from their own Order—a deprivation which they felt bitterly. The parish Church of St. Saviour's (best known in Norwich as “Mr. Cooke's Church”) was their only resource, but it was in no sanguine spirit that they anticipated the change, for the incumbent's “views” both as regards Church services and their own Community were well known to them, and at best they felt that they would be unwelcome guests in a house of God where the so-called “moderate” and chilly services would be a sad contrast to those they had been accustomed to enjoy and assist in for so many months.

There were, of course, no daily Masses at St. Saviour's

—only an early Celebration on Sundays and a few High Festivals; and it was on these rare occasions that the Monks, their Third Order Brothers and Sisters, and some of the St. William's Guild boys, presented themselves as communicants. This innovation, however, caused a good deal of commotion in the parish. Mr. Cooke himself did not care to see black habits and tonsures in his Protestant church, while some of his congregation expressed a similar opinion in still stronger terms. Finally the Bishop was appealed to!

It was difficult for his lordship to forbid harmless Christian men from approaching the Sacraments of the Established Church, so he did the next best thing—he aimed his guns at their uniforms. “If these Monks,” he wrote to Mr. Cooke, “present themselves for Communion in their ridiculous dress, you have my permission to pass them over.” And Mr. Cooke, thinking doubtless thereby to choose the better part, took full advantage of the Bishop's sanction. It would have been interesting to have inquired of Dr. Pelham if his strictures extended beyond Monks to other of his fellow-countrymen who happened to wear regulation uniform. Should a sailor, for example, present himself at the altar rails in his man-of-war togger, would the ridiculous dress of this unoffending bluejacket be a valid plea for the officiating clergy to deny him the Christian right of his Church's Sacrament?

But there is comfort as well as mystery in setting side by side with these Episcopal pin-pricks the spontaneous cordiality with which, years later, this same prelate was pleased to treat the Reverend Father and welcome him to his own diocese. Doubtless, as time went on, the grotesqueness of the dress had somewhat modified in his estimation, or perhaps—which is more likely—he had already accepted it as one of the many inevitable things that in this world it is kind and wise to smile upon with the charm of magnanimity.

After this unkind and illogical treatment at the hands of those who should have known better, the Monks contented themselves with the Masses of their own Priory Church.

CHAPTER XXV

"AN ENEMY HATH DONE THIS"

"There's sorrow on the sea,
At rest it cannot be ;
'Tis treacherous to me,
But Jesus rules the waves."

THERE are certain portions of these Norwich chronicles which both for biographer and biographed it would have been far pleasanter to have passed by—on the other side. The Reverend Father Ignatius, besides being a holy-living Monk, is too innate a gentleman to burden the weak pen of a woman with so much as a feather's weight of unnecessary or painful responsibility, nevertheless as the minister of God he has a higher cause to serve than even the most exquisite of human considerations.

This volume has for its basis more than one motive. The first is obviously "Ad majorem Dei gloriam," and the second, the plain setting forth of a pathetic life-story in which cold-blooded malignity and wilful misrepresentation play the most relentless and well-nigh damning parts.

Silence is a many-sided expression. It has its majestic moments and its degraded ones, its affectations, and even its guilt. It is in order to be neither affected nor guilty in the sight of God that the Reverend Father desires me to trace as briefly as may be, without blurring significance, the outline of those hideous shadows which about this time began to hover round his beloved Monastery in the shape of miscreants blaspheming the garb of Monks. Only in quite late years have the last faint echoes of this fatality—for it merits no lighter name—died out of his life, the life which thieves, rogues, and slanderers have martyred into a

lingering rack of sorrow and disillusion that in any other man must have ended in despair.

It was in the year 1865, and the Reverend Father, who was then completing his twenty-eighth year, was far away in Newcastle, preaching a Mission in that busy northern centre. No more terrible or inopportune moment could have been chosen for a calamity; but God's ways are not our ways, and the Cross had to be borne.

On the same day that the Monk was announced to preach in the evening to what he knew would be a crowd of many hundreds, a Norwich newspaper reached him, in which a paragraph referring to Elm Hill Priory was marked for his attention. Of the facts therein detailed, with all the cruel exaggeration which penny-a-liners know so well how to insinuate into their copy, the following may be accepted as a faithful digest. The mother of one of the St. William's Guild boys, happening to have occasion to empty her son's pocket, had discovered a certain letter concealed there, which purported to have been addressed to him by one of the Monks—a Novice who was known in Community to affect an artistic and presumably æsthetic tendency, but for the rest, to be a harmless and rather vapid individual.

No sooner did this good woman take possession of the letter, than she read it, and after the manner of femininity, carried it to her neighbours and friends to do likewise. Not that the letter itself contained *offence*, but it was a foolish and sickly-sentimental production—almost reminiscent, says the Reverend Father, of Jowett's translation of Plato, or other classical plague pits—that unfortunately for our Colleges and Mechanics' Institutes, are disseminated at popular prices, and with the unblushing approbation of salaried dignitaries of the Church of the land. To predisposed minds such a letter could not fail to arouse illimitable suggestion. The flutter of scandal that succeeded the handing round of this miserable effusion need not be dwelt upon. As a natural consequence, it brought the eagles of the Press to the spot, one of whom easily persuaded the boy's mother to give him the letter for publica-

tion. A very few hours later it appeared in the local columns under a highly coloured and sensational heading, which ensured propaganda by promising the reading public a gigantic nut to crack, in the shape of "Startling Revelations at an English Monastery."

And the ball once set rolling spread broadcast from end to end of the United Kingdom. The Reverend Father's first impulse on reading the disgraceful charges so exultingly set forth by the Norwich contributor, was to return forthwith to his Monastery, search out the accused and their accusers, and bring the whole affair to summary and public justice. But the very agony of his grief seemed to lend him counsel, and he was enabled to measure the expediency of such a step with a degree of calm, far-seeing calculation which he has since recalled with wonderment. Rapidly and painfully the eventualities of his position flashed through his mind, and with no less clearness his decision was made. Hastening to Norwich might be interpreted as flight! The news must already have reached Newcastle—scandal travels on wings—he was even at that very moment a marked man in the eyes of the great stranger-city—he must trust in his Jesus Only, and stay to brave it out.

Then action followed thought, and at his request the Newcastle dailies were procured by the Brother who accompanied him on the Mission. Even as he had surmised, the red in the sky had spread northward—all the local specials were bristling with the news.

A telegram was then and there despatched to Elm Hill Priory addressed to the Senior Monk, who in the Superior's absence was his representative. "Is this thing true?" was the simple message, and its answer, still more laconic, was conveyed in the single syllable, "Yes."

I shall best show my appreciation of the Reverend Father's anguish on receiving this confirmation of his worst fears, by passing it over in respectful silence. He now knew all, therefore the initiative was in his own hands. Two things were at least imperative—the expulsion of the Novice from Community, and his own preparation to face

the crowds of Newcastle a few hours later. The first was accomplished by wire and immediately, the second by prayer, and an almighty invocation to that beautiful child-like faith which has ever been the leading light of this great but singular soul.

As evening approached, Newcastle grew breathless with curious expectancy. Long before the hour advertised for the Reverend Father's appearance on the platform, the hall was packed from floor to ceiling, and at the doors and far away down the street a dense crowd was gathered, either busily discussing the topic that was on every lip, or straining to get a glimpse of the man on whose innocent shoulders they were ready to throw the responsibility of the "Norwich Scandal"—that being the hideous title under which the shortcomings of the degenerate Novice were announced by journalism to the world at large.

There was a diversity of opinion as to the Reverend Father's probable attitude with regard to the personal inferences which would inevitably follow the flight of clouds now resting upon the Institution of which he himself was the head and corner-stone. Some thought he would not dare to preach at all that evening, and that, although still announced to do so, he had in all probability left Newcastle—and the battlefield. On the whole, however, popular conjecture inclined to the belief that a sermon of sorts would be delivered, but that the preacher would either ignore the fatal subject altogether, or meet the charge as a slander, and challenge it with emphatic denial.

Great was the stupefaction, therefore, when, punctually at the hour advertised, the Monk took his place before this mass of eager and for the most part highly antagonistic humanity, newspaper in hand, and with a grave serenity that sent almost a shock amongst the crowds who had anticipated they knew not what, but something very different. Those near enough to get an intimate view of the Father's face saw at once that it was deeply emotioned but undisturbed. Dead silence greeted his appearance, and as he quietly unfolded his newspaper and took one of his

peculiar preliminary looks round the tightly packed floor and gallery, the traditional pin might indeed have been heard to fall.

Those who have heard the Reverend Father speak know well the carrying powers of his voice. On this occasion, whether from inward anguish or the intense solemnity of his intention, his opening words fell with almost startling distinctness on the ears of his excited listeners. Of the memorable prelude with which he ushered in the dominant motive of his discourse, I subjoin a very imperfect and abridged outline.

“He had come to Newcastle,” said the preacher, “for the express purpose of pleading a great and good cause—the revival of Monasticism as a sacred and salutary institution of the National Establishment. He was, as every one knew, himself a Monk,—the newspaper in his hand would have told them that, and a great deal else besides,—and never in his life had he preached Monkery with so much confidence and satisfaction as on the present occasion, to that particular congregation, and under circumstances which rendered such a sermon necessary as well as instructive. Like himself, they had all read their morning newspaper, therefore they knew as much as he did of the heavy blow that had fallen upon his Monastery home, and he had no need to recapitulate for their benefit all the elaborate commentaries with which the Press had seen fit to underline the occurrence. Of that occurrence itself, however, he intended to say a few very plain words.

“Only that day, for the first time and through the public medium of the local newspaper, had he been made aware that in his little camp of Christian soldiery an enemy—an unspeakable traitor—had been at work. Of his own feelings, his personal and inexpressible sorrow, he should not attempt to speak. He must bury the man in the Monk and the Englishman. There was a duty which he owed his God, his conscience, and his fellow-countrymen, and he had already fulfilled it. Time was still very young, but as a Christian he had not suffered those few past hours

to be unfruitful. He had telegraphed inquiry to the Monastery, and upon the strength of the reply had again wired the expulsion of the accused party then and there from the monastic premises. So much for his own part. Now for the other side, the respectable world which blushed up to its eyes at the bare mention of a single instance of degeneracy in a monastic Community, and merely shrugged its shoulders, or winked for expediency sake, at whole hot-beds of iniquity flourishing systematically and undeterred among a section of humanity that wore caps instead of tonsures, and aspired to College gowns in lieu of cowls. Let the Press of England look first into the heart of its schools and popular educational institutes, before exhausting the whole treasury of its vituperation upon one head, for no better reason than it had a shaven crown, upon one small blot among so many great ones, because the aggressor happened to be a Monk.

"Doubtless, this potent but mock-modest Public Voice was persuaded that at the sound of its thunderings the walls of his Monastery would crumble to dust, and the Church of the land be for ever quit both of himself and his Monasticism; but for once it had made a mistake. If ever he (the speaker) had received a powerful impetus to his enterprise, it was at that very moment, a golden moment of opportunity for teaching dwellers in the world the Monastic Code by which offenders against God and man were judged and punished in religious Community. If there were any heads of schools, colleges, or educational institutions present, they would do well to follow his example and do as he had done to-day. Wheresoever (whether in secular establishments or otherwise) miscellaneous humanity was to be found congregated together, there in their midst would be sorrow and sin under one shape or another—a condition of natural imperfection for which no Superior, however devoted or astute, could be responsible. But where the Head or Master *was* responsible, and unspeakably so too, was in his dealings with these miseries when once they came to light. In the sight of God there was

but one way of treating sins which threatened contamination of a deadly nature, and that was the expulsion of the sinner, root and branch. This painful but urgent step he had himself been forced to take that day, and for a cause of which they were all well aware. He had done his duty as a Monk and a man, and as to any criticism which his action might provoke—he snapped his fingers in its face."

And with the dropping of this final gauntlet he broke the thread of all preamble, and proceeded to the real heart of his theme—a stirring dissertation on the ultimate aim and purpose of the Monastic Revival, whose resurrection he had pioneered single-handed into national notoriety.

It would be impossible to analyse the effect of the preacher's opening words on the minds of his congregation. At the conclusion of the preface a more profound stillness than ever seemed to envelope that spellbound assembly; a great wave of astonishment, not to say arrest, went sweeping round the hall, for the Monk's independent attitude of quiet dignity had impressed them not a little. He had handled his subject from an unexpected standpoint. Disdaining alike the vehemence of denial or even the semblance of a serpentine wriggle, he had somehow made himself master of an almost untenable position. His public felt the move to have been a powerful one—a checkmate to his slanderers, through the simple turning on them the tables of their own abominable inferences. The relative modes of warfare were, however, digressive. The Reverend Father hit fair and square between the eyes, whereas his enemies preferred to skirmish in the rear, or at any rate without the bounds of direct retaliation.

But the Monk's object was gained. Although his own heart only knew its inward bitterness, he had worked his day's work. From the judged, he had become the adjudicator, and had placed his dialectics on an unimpeachable and definite plane. No one could now affect to misunderstand the bent of his intentions, and for the rest, it was in the Greatest Hand of all.

Even within sound of so tragical an undercurrent, that

evening at Newcastle was destined to be lightened by more than one comical aside. During the course of the sermon some malicious spirit suddenly moved a very portly old gentleman—the holder of a gallery front seat—to indulge in some reflections at the Monk's expense which were decidedly personal and rude. For some time the preacher elected to ignore this interruption, but his forbearance meeting with renewed vigour on the part of his friend in the gallery, he was obliged to hazard a duologue with that voluble old soul. As the complimentary refrain of "O thou foul heretic and teacher of all abominations!" seemed to be the staple motive of the gentleman's entertainment, the Reverend Father, looking blandly in his direction, asked him with radiant courtesy if he would kindly favour the company with the meaning of the term "heretic," and its relevancy to himself—an orthodox upholder of the Catholic Faith.

This invitation was not accepted, and a distinct titter was beginning to make itself heard, when a second voice piped up aloft, and a champion stood forth to cover the confusion of his friend. "Do you expect this gentleman to be a walking encyclopædia?" he said indignantly, apostrophising the Monk. "No," said the latter, "I really do not; but I *do* most certainly expect every sensible man to know the meaning of a word which he sees fit to reiterate continually before a public audience." Then followed a short parenthesis, in which the Reverend Father defined the origin of the Greek-derived epithet and its logical application to those who entertained personal opinions on doctrinal points that were at variance with the creed of the Catholic Church. For this reason it must be evident to all present that if there was a heretic in the hall it could hardly be himself, a Catholic Monk, but more likely the "dear old gentleman" in the gallery, who evidently held some Protestant scruples of his own, that were quite out of tune with orthodox Catholicism. And thus, with infinite tenderness, he shifted the heretical cap from his own head to the one it best fitted—in the gallery.

This touch of satire went delightfully home. Only in the heart of one individual among the many hundreds did it strike the spark of discontent. There was a singular-looking, suet-pudding-cheeked man, seated in one of the ground-floor loggias. With the sudden "pop up" of a Jack-in-the-box, he thrust his face forward and gesticulated violently. "I suppose you'd have *me* be a Monk too?" he said insolently; and the unction with which the Father's reply was given literally brought down the house. "Oh dear no, my poor fellow," he answered pityingly; "I would not have you within my doors at any price!" A burst of merriment ensued, which was with difficulty subdued when the Monk resumed the more serious threads of his discourse.

So ended this critical evening—a strange medley of the intense and laughable—a weird picture wherein storm and sunshine battled for mastery in a great wild sky.

The oration over, the Reverend Father left the platform amid a demonstration of lively but mixed sentiments. But beyond being "mobbed" to his rooms by a crowd of curious natives, the town of Newcastle showed no inclination to offer a gratuitous supplement to the beast-fights of Ipswich and elsewhere.

Back post-haste to Norwich was the Monk's next step towards uprooting the infamous imputations cast broadcast against the home of his many prayers. Here, among his faithful flock and followers, he knew that sympathy alone would greet his return; but, on the other hand, the busy band of outsiders had to be reckoned with, above all the unappeased polemics, who were ever ready to pounce upon the smallest plea for raising the wind in his direction.

I am desired by the Reverend Father to add, as a personal note of his own, that at this time he felt justified in repudiating the gravity of the suggestions distilled from that unfortunate letter, and levelled so unmercifully against its writer and receiver. He had no reason, and therefore no right, to consider the offender anything worse than a flimsy-minded nonentity—a negative personality with whom

it would be almost impossible to associate a flash of red light. Beyond the everyday weaknesses inseparable from all phases of humanity, he had never felt one breath within his Monastery that could have warned him of a destroying presence. This being the case, he returned from Newcastle, sick at heart it is true, with the knowledge that scandal of the most repellent nature had fallen upon his cloister, but in the sincere belief that the man whose expulsion he had ordered was nothing more guilty than a mischievous fool, whose folly had very nearly ruined the whole Community, by provoking misconstruction on the part of an evil-thinking world. That this delinquent was really the miscreant which public denunciation pretended him to be, was a conclusion to be resolutely laid aside. Only in later years, and by an irrelevant development of events, did the conviction reach him that he had been deceived, and that the world, though cruel, had not in this instance been altogether unjust.

It is by the Reverend Father's express injunction that I underline this marginal in scarlet ink.

The Superior's home-coming from this memorable Newcastle Mission caused no little commotion in Norwich. His own Community and congregation were anxious to testify their confidence by an enthusiastic welcome, while the less sympathetic party sought to satisfy their curiosity by mustering strong to look on. The result meant a busy to and fro up Elm Hill, and a crowd which gathered at intermittent intervals round the Monastery door.

There was a substratum of malevolence in these voluntary sentinels, and the Superior, imagining as much, determined to pay them for their pains. Very soon after re-entering Elm Hill Priory, he reappeared on the threshold accompanied by two children, a little girl and boy, whom he kissed affectionately before the eyes of the assembled gossips. "You see, I am neither going to close my Monastery nor give up having my children round me," he said, laughing, "if that is what you are all waiting to know"; and with that he disappeared once more, taking the children with him, an arm round the neck of each.

The words were simple enough, the action still simpler ; but they turned the tide. "Come and give us a kiss all round, Reverend Father!" was the valedictory chorus, and upon its strength the groups good-humouredly dispersed.

It was a homely finale to so desperate a crisis, nevertheless the Monk had nailed his colours to the mast. Every soul in Norwich knew that there would be no crowing over a crestfallen runaway in the person of their friend the Superior. He had taken to his guns, and they felt him to be the man who would stick to them. Himself *sans peur et sans reproche*, he could afford to face the scathe of public scrutiny, and look it straight in the eyes.

All things in this world evolve and revolve mechanically. An absorbing topic is devoured to-day, forgotten to-morrow, and in process of time even the fiery interest of the Norwich Scandal waned grudgingly from glare to glow. The ashes were still smouldering, red-hot as ever, and ready to flare up to flame at the mere waft of a lady's fan, but for the moment the novelty was dead. Like all others of its kind, it had been superseded by something newer and of more immediate moment ; and in his cell the saddened Monk drew a deep sigh of respite, and thanked God that there was dawn in his heart once more.

But he had only told the first small bead in a whole rosary of suffering and humiliation.

Amongst the many thoughts which the revival of these long-ago memories must invoke in the Reverend Father's mind, the following reflection, he assures me, is the first and foremost—how great a matter the relatively little fire of the Norwich Scandal of 1865 kindled, compared to the significant modicum of censure passed upon a colossal repetition of the same tragedy produced quite recently on another stage of that identical locality—the county of Norfolk.

In the first instance, the scene being a Monastery, the public bull's-eye was turned in full flare upon the occurrence. In the second—the higher walks of Smart Society being most inconveniently compromised—lights were lowered,

curtains drawn, and the whole affair, the Norwich Scandal of 1903, consigned to "the great hushed-up"—that complicated and infallible Social Safe, of which even the mighty Pressman is denied the privilege of the *passe-partout*.

O Tempora ! O Mores !

CHAPTER XXVI

"THE ENEMY . . . IS THE DEVIL"

"Jesus, Name of Power!
Jesus, Name of Peace!
Scatter Satan's angels,
Bring poor souls release."

IN expelling the degenerate Novice from his Community, the Superior had only bruised, but not crushed—as he so fondly imagined—the monster that had already breathed its blight upon the holy cloister set apart as the outer court of Heaven. Perhaps as a natural feature of his own individuality, or more likely as the outcome of many complex causes, the Reverend Father Ignatius has frequently been the victim of modern Iscariotism. Indiscriminate sympathy is at all times a weapon of such delicately tempered steel that a coarse touch can grip it easily, and turn it against its owner's bosom.

Confidence is just one of those magnificent qualities which hold the divided blessing, swaying on a hair. Its weakness is as refreshing as its strength, but the redemption and danger of both overlap. With the Monk of Llanthony the inspiration of confidence is twofold. It covers absorption and transmission—the beautiful power of belief on the one hand, the magnetism of imparting the same on the other. The result has been many bitter disillusiones, many sweet surprises, splashes of rain, dashes of sun; nevertheless, the idiosyncrasy is so spontaneous, that without it the Reverend Father would lose one of his strongest points—his own particular identity. Until the last thread is wound off the skein, he must go forth confiding and giving confidence, gathering in the husks, scattering the corn of glad-

ness, and thus forward to the Land where confidence will be a superfluous grace, for the footfall of a Judas is a thing unknown.

One of the first to note the Monk's tendency towards over-trustfulness was his gentle mother. With a goodly share of the intuitive insight meted out to some women by a kind Providence, Mrs. Lyne was a born physiognomist, and an excellent judge of character. Amongst the few personal consolations which surrounded the Reverend Father's return to Norwich after his terrible experience at Newcastle, was the presence of Dr. Pusey and the Lady Abbess, who still occupied their quarters in the Cathedral Close, and a few weeks later, the visit of Mrs. Lyne herself, to whom, as an anxious and loving mother, it is needless to say the recent Norwich Scandal had been an overwhelming shock and distress. Mrs. Lyne chose the Lenten season for her descent upon the Monastery, and for a simple reason with which all fellow-mothers will readily sympathise. Besides ministering to her child's comfort, by listening to his griefs, or cheering and encouraging him as she knew so well how to do, she had his bodily interest likewise at heart. He was at this period in sadly delicate health, thin to positive attenuation, and in a condition of nerve exhaustion which constantly threatened collapse. The prospect of a forty days' fast under these circumstances filled this troubled mother with prophetic dread. Trusting to the unexpected influence of her personal presence, she determined to pass Lent herself in Norwich, and even, if only at a distance, to strive by every means in her power to circumvent her son in what she felt to be his almost suicidal intentions. Mrs. Lyne therefore took up her abode in the house of a Third Order Sister, who subsequently became a Nun. This well-known lady—a certain Mrs. Taylor, and afterwards the first enclosed Sister of the Anglo-Benedictine Order—took the name of Louisa on entering religion, as a tribute to Mrs. Lyne herself, and in remembrance of her memorable visit in the year 1865. As may be imagined, many and frequent were her journeys to the Monastery grille, laden with a

hundred and one little comforts which she knew her poverty-vowed Monk so sorely needed, and were so utterly beyond the reach of the Community purse.

The Reverend Father often refers to those tender, delicate ministrations, many of which he was obliged by the Rule of monastic dietary or restriction to decline. Sometimes he even fancies that he looked too lightly on this motherly solicitude at the time, but he was an over-worked and preoccupied organiser of a daily growing enterprise, and in the whirl of care and restless labour the Monk sometimes submerged the man. "How I often still reproach myself," he has said to me more than once, "when I remember how patiently and lovingly she used to come, and bring me all sorts of nourishing things which she thought would do me good. One day—I shall never forget it—she came to the grille during a time of Solemn Silence, and I was forced to put my finger to my lip and sign to her to go. The look on her face as she turned away is with me still. How she must have loved me!"

It is deeply pathetic to feel the delicate vibrations of this thread of beautiful kinship which bound together these mother and child souls.

Mrs. Lyne was not only a sweetly sympathetic woman, she was also a keen observer, and it did not take her long to form a fair approximate of the Reverend Father's exact position, both as regards his influence in the town of Norwich, and also what concerned him still nearer—the characters of those by whom he was surrounded in Community. The baby Ignatius included, Mrs. Lyne did not hesitate to pronounce judgment from the physiognomist's standpoint on all who surrounded her son's daily life and work. Her impressions are distinctly noteworthy, for, as time went on, events proved their extraordinary accuracy and discrimination. Of the infant Samuel, as he was mostly called, one look at his face seemed to suffice. "My dear child," she said to her son, when her introduction to the oblate had taken place, "don't set your heart upon that boy, he will only disappoint you. He has a very

curious disposition, and not a nice one,"—and in years to come her words were too truly verified.

But another individual living under the roof of Elm Hill Priory gave this anxious mother still more gloomy premonition on her child's behalf. There were two newcomers to the Community, men of apparently unimpeachable respectability, for they bore letters of recommendation from influential quarters, and had both reached that sober period of middle age when wild oats may be supposed to have been sown and reaped. These men have played such desperate parts in the tragic side of the Father's life, and they have likewise figured so miserably in public print, that I have no hesitation in branding them with their names in religion, even if, for the sake of members of their families who may still be living, their identity as citizens should be held in reserve.

Brother Maurus, who bore with him letters purporting to support his statement that he had been Wesleyan Chaplain to the Governor of Tasmania, was a man of some fifty years of age, highly educated, and possessed of a tongue which stood him in good stead, besides other talents of peculiar value to a monastic Community. Brother Stanislaus was his junior by about ten years, and a creation altogether of a lower type. Face, speech, and wits were below the Maurus level, but, on the other hand, what education lacked, sanctity apparently supplemented; and, highest recommendation of all, this Stanislaus presented himself to the Superior with the express approval and on the authority of no less a person than the Rev. John Chambers, Vicar of St. Mary's, Soho, and Founder of the Holy Cross Society. The Reverend Father had for some years belonged to this Society himself, being one of its first members; therefore Mr. Chambers' recommendation ensured his protégé a specially warm welcome to the Elm Hill Monastery, more emphatically so that the letter described the new aspirant "as a most holy man," and one whose vocation to the higher life was a certainty beyond question.

On the strength of this assertion from so trustworthy a source, Brother Stanislaus was not only speedily admitted to the Novitiate, but he was very soon promoted to the charge of the St. William's Guild—an office for which his mature years and exceptionally reassuring credentials seemed to make him peculiarly fitted. A more disastrous step was never ventured than this delegation of power to one who was absolutely unworthy to breathe the same air as the young and unsophisticated, much less to pose as their leader and referee. For the time being, however, the Superior remained in happy ignorance of the real self which lay hidden beneath the outward show of a spiritual fervour whose ingenuous simplicity would have deceived even a more experienced man.

There was only one soul on whom the pious veneer of Brother Stanislaus produced repulsion—vehement repulsion—and that was Mrs. Lyne. From the moment she first set eyes on the man, her opinion of him was formed. So intense was the aversion with which he inspired her, that she lost no time in imparting her feelings to her son. "Pray, pray do not trust that horrible man," she entreated him, more than once. "I am convinced that he is an unmitigated scamp." These womanly warnings the Monk was inclined to disregard. He loved his mother dearly, and reverently respected her judgment in all things unmonastic, but in this case he had the testimonial of the Rev. John Chambers still ringing in his ears, and he could not bring himself to believe that any one bearing such a supreme passport could be anything but a saint of God on earth. Thus for the moment—and a lamentably short moment it proved to be—Brother Stanislaus continued to enjoy his Superior's confidence, and assert his sway over the St. William's Guild, without any suspicion of his vile intentions being aroused. The final crash, however, was not long in coming.

The occasion was the Reverend Father's first London Mission—an historical event in his career which he is not likely to forget. He was to preach in St. Martin's Hall,

Longacre. Mrs. Lyne and her Norwich friend, Mrs. Utten Browne, accompanied him to town. Rooms in Osnaburgh Street, a few doors from St. Saviour's Hospital, were taken for himself and the infant oblate, who invariably went with him on all his travels, while the two ladies retired to Mrs. Lyne's own house in Blomfield Terrace, from whence they presided over the details of this somewhat hazardous enterprise.

The Mission itself was an unqualified success. In spite of the sultry summer weather, Society turned out valiantly to hear the notorious Monk, and a great deal of jewellery was contributed at the offertory, as well as a goodly sum in the more ordinary shape of current coin. It was the attendant circumstances only that were unfavourable. The baby Ignatius fell ill of scarlet fever, and although in the end a Sister from St. Saviour's had to be summoned to the rescue, the Reverend Father could be seldom induced to leave his little favourite to take the necessary rest and nourishment which alone could enable him to bear the exertion and excitement of that anxious week of labour. Had not his mother been near to anticipate his needs, and urge him to some degree of care and prudence, there is little doubt but that he would have succumbed utterly under the strain.

At this period, Stanislaus had been admitted to the Novitiate just a month, Maurus only four or five days, having received his habit on the eve of the Reverend Father's departure to this very Mission.

One morning—it was almost at the close of the Mission, and the Monk, though intensely grateful for the success of the undertaking, was thoroughly exhausted—a message was brought him that one of his Brothers—Brother Stanislaus—wanted to see him on urgent business. He was in the act of shaving his tonsure when the news reached him, but so great was his alarm that some dire misfortune had befallen the Monastery, that he gave orders for the immediate admission of the unexpected visitor. A single glance at the new-comer's face must have convinced the Reverend Father that he was in presence of an execrable villain.

The story of Stanislaus was soon told. The Monastery was in a state of mutiny. He (Father Ignatius) had been unanimously deposed as Superior, and another elected by Chapter in his place. Stanislaus was the bearer of a formal deed of deposition, which waited the signature of "the ex-Abbot." This obtained, a copy would be sent for approval to the Archbishop of Canterbury. Would the Reverend Father kindly affix his name without delay, as he (the bearer) had to carry the same back to Norwich, for instant transmission to the Archbishop?

The Superior's first impulse was to laugh outright at the delivery of so preposterous a mandate, but he contented himself by saying kindly, "Now, Brother Stanislaus, just you go on shaving my tonsure for me, and don't talk nonsense." Stanislaus dared not refuse. He sulkily took up the razor and completed the interrupted toilet. This little interlude gave the Reverend Father time to review the situation, and decide upon a course of action that might be at once discreet and dignified. To know at least what had happened in his absence, and the cause, seemed the first obvious duty, and he bade the delegate of his rebel Community bestir himself, and give him as briefly as possible an outline of what had taken place since he left Norwich six days ago, in the happy confidence that honest and devoted Monks were carrying on his work, as loyal representatives of an absent administrator.

The Novice's summary of events was neither lucid nor detailed. Every admission had to be literally drawn from him, like the extraction of a mental tooth; but the Superior having already had considerable experience in reading between human lines, was not at a loss to form a practical notion of what was before him. The cause of the rebellion lay in a nutshell. The fifty-year-old Maurus being in his own estimation a most erudite and impressive potentate, found it distasteful to submit his will or judgment to an authority more than twenty years his junior, and, as he was pleased to consider, his inferior in gifts mental and administrative. The disputed straw which set this mutinous

inclination blazing was the subject of penance—the right of the young Superior to inflict punishments, and the obligation of those who had taken vows to him, to undergo the forfeit of their shortcomings. Solemn Silence had been wilfully broken in Community just before the Reverend Father left for London, and as a reminder to all concerned, for so grave a breach of Rule, the offenders were directed to make satisfaction by devoutly tracing a Cross with their tongues on the ground—an act of prostration and humiliation which directly implicated the unruly member that had unfortunately caused the transgression.

This penance—neither a painful nor protracted one—furnished an excellent plea for revolt. Maurus was an able and plausible person, so much so that he very soon had the rest of the Community, with two or three exceptions, by the nose, and assumed an easy dominion over minds more ignorant or younger than his own. He posed as the pioneer to a higher ideal of cloister life, and in the light of an Improver and injured Setter-to-rights of a defective legislation, very quickly had the sympathy of his fellow-Novices completely on his side. The Monastery Chaplain, from whose sacred office alone better things might have been expected, was one of the first to go over to the enemy. A mock Chapter was called, at which the whole category of their grievances was read and discussed, with a result that a republic was declared, the Superior deposed, and a certain Brother formally elected to reign in his place. The three chief causes of complaint were as follows: The infliction of punishments by an arbitrary Superior; the state of abject subservience to which their vows reduced their natural independence of spirit; and last, not least, the supervision of their letters both written and received—one of the invariable restrictions to be found in all Rules of religious Orders.

These good Brothers were of opinion that a mighty redress might be their portion if their case was reported to the official guardians of a free country—so to the Magistrate they determined to go. A legal summons was therefore

deliberately taken out against the loyal Extern Porter, who, in spite of every threat or argument on the part of the mutineers, quietly received the letters of the enclosed Community from the hands of the postman, and forwarded them, as (under the circumstances) was his bounden duty, to his Superior in London. The first point, however, was to set the new dynasty in working order, and there was no time to lose. In the course of a day or so, the ex-Abbot would be returning, and they must complete his confusion, before he should be in a position either to protest or defend himself.

For this purpose the Brother-keeper-of-the-keys had to be won over, his badges of office required of him by the new Superior, and handed to the arch-conspirator Maurus. But here an unexpected breakwater arose to stem the revolutionary tide. Brother Philip the custodian was a tough customer. "Not a bit of it," he said doggedly, when requested to give up his keys. "I will only hand them over to the Superior." Then he added, with scathing emphasis, "And *won't* you all catch it when he gets back!"

So the rogues had to content themselves with breaking open closed locks, and in this burglar-like fashion a regular sacking of the Reverend Father's possessions ensued. His writing-table was the first stronghold attacked. Here his private papers were ransacked unmercifully, and every penny of his savings transferred to the pockets of Maurus and his accomplice Stanislaus. Several other Brothers were undoubtedly compromised in this disgraceful mutiny, but the thieves were the two ringleaders above mentioned.

Worse than all, the Reverend Father's letters of Orders happened to be amongst the medley of miscellany stowed away in the table-drawers. These the wily Maurus carefully scanned, and, realising their value, coolly appropriated them to himself for a purpose of which I shall have reason to speak in a later paragraph. When the robbers had collected their plunder, they proceeded to dispense it broadcast. Boots and Roman collars were purchased for the Community, and the newly-elected "Abbot" was for-

mally invested with the Reverend Father's pectoral Cross—the monastic insignia of Superiorship. The deed of deposition was next drawn up, its duplicate intended for the Archbishop's endorsement duly copied, and a summons applied for, against the plucky Porter, for "unlawful retention of property."

All these measures, and others still more wicked (of which more anon), had been planned and taken during the few days that followed the Reverend Father's departure for his London Mission. The progress of sin is generally rapid, but on this occasion it certainly walked to its ends with seven-leagued boots. Elm Hill Priory was upside down, and as a natural result, the proclamation of the new dynasty was very soon circulated in the town.

It was at this critical moment that the lights were turned on the real nature of the estimation in which the Reverend Father was held by his fellow-citizens. Norwich rose in his defence as one man, and that a madman. The indignation of the townsfolk knew no bounds, and as to the Third Order contingent, it literally breathed fire. In the Monastery Chapel, where the usurpers strove to cap their effrontery by carrying on the usual public services, indignant protests were heard on all sides. But for the sacredness of the place, a lynching party would undoubtedly have stepped in and dealt summary justice; but the Presence on the altar was a restraint which even the most fiery did not dare ignore. As it was, stones and other reminders were thrown warningly at the rebel Chaplain whenever he attempted to say Mass, and as to Maurus, who had assumed the rôle of preacher in the Reverend Father's place, no sooner did he show his face than he was literally pelted off by an enthusiastic opposition, in which ladies were conspicuous alike for daring and numbers. Neither Masses nor orations were permitted by the faithful Ignatiusites, under this disgraceful republic, and they held their ground. Even Sister Faith, the embodiment of gentleness and refinement, proved herself once more to be an amazon of unmistakable prowess. Like the Psalmist of Israel, she

went to her unequal warfare armed with the familiar pebble—a harmless missile, which she aimed with more intention than direction at the head of her monastic Philistine (Maurus).

The uproar raised against these usurpers became so serious that the public services were discontinued, and both friends and foes enjoyed a breathless armistice, pending the return of the absentee, the Monk Missioner Ignatius. Many and conflicting were the surmises current as to what that return might mean. Every one knew that he would quell the insurrection with a firm hand, but what about the recreant mutineers? Would he expel them one and all, and close his Monastery doors for ever on an impossible and ungrateful Cause? That was the question.

In the midst of this painful uncertainty rose the prophetic voice of a well-known personality in the religious world—"Deane Amelia," the senior member of Miss Sellon's Sisterhood at the Abbey, Plymouth. "I can tell you all what will happen," said this inspired lady. "When the Superior comes home, he will simply crush the whole matter with a look, and then turn round and forgive everybody." And, with the exception of one or two variations, this primitively expressed forecast was not far from being fulfilled.

On the day and hour when the Reverend Father arrived in Norwich, the two ringleaders, Maurus and Stanislaus, were absent from the Monastery, pleading their martyrdom before the Magisterial Bench. The fort was held meanwhile by the poor bewildered "Abbot" and his retinue of still more unhappy-looking subordinates. At the railway station an extraordinary deputation awaited the arrival of the London train. The platform was invaded by a perfect mob of men, women, and children—all of them Monastery disciples, who had come from every corner of the district to gather round their chief and see him safely through. There must have been a very strong sense of emotion as well as astonishment in the sight which greeted this sorely-tried man, as he set foot once more in storm-swept Norwich,

after an eventful Mission of a week's duration, which in itself had been a great physical strain on his already debilitated nerves and brain. The reception at the station was mere child's play to the frantic ovation which awaited him on his progress through the crowded streets to the Priory door.

The whole town seemed seized with a glad delirium ! A seething mass of laughing and crying humanity lined the route from one extremity to the other, and like the gust of a gale a great broken wave of greeting—kindly sympathetic and almost inexpressible greeting—rushed out towards him from those brave, loyal hearts. Men were as hysterical in their demonstrations as the women. They tore the coats off their backs and spread them for the Monk to walk over, while shawls and jackets rained down in all directions for the same purpose. Those who could not get a foothold on road or pavement took refuge in the houses overlooking the route, and gathered in masses at the windows, waving handkerchiefs, strewing flowers, and screaming themselves hoarse, or craning their necks at the imminent peril of breaking them by overbalancing headlong into the street. I am guilty of no exaggeration in painting this scene with its own crude colouring. One who was present assures me that "never was so mad a sight seen anywhere."

The Monk himself was overwhelmed in more senses than one by the fanatical warmth of his reception. His progress over the carpet of miscellaneous wardrobes was a work of art and difficulty. Too devout a Christian not to shrink with horror from the obvious similitude suggested by this strange pageant, he was likewise too kindly a man to tread the garments of his poor neighbours under travel-stained sandals. So it was by way of an elaborate and intricate zigzag that the walk was slowly accomplished.

Nevertheless, and despite its many drawbacks, the ovation was beautiful in its spontaneous heartiness on the part of what is so often misnamed a cold British crowd, and it moved the Reverend Father far more deeply than

all the flourishes of the most eloquent rhetoric could possibly have done. One of the most poignant touches was the extraordinary influx of little children upon the scene. Those old enough to stand were thrust forward on all sides, with the entreaty that he would "just lay his hands on them," and the tinies were huddled pell-mell into his arms, so that he might bless each one of them before giving them back to their mothers. It was indeed "the maddest sight" that ever was, but it had its glorious side—the people loved him; and with this thought the acuteness of his sorrow was appeased.

The Reverend Father having purposely withheld the hour of his arrival from the Community, he took them most thoroughly *à l'improviste*. Maurus, Stanislaus, and the Extern Porter were fighting it out before the Bench, and therefore absent when he reached the Priory, and the postern having been carelessly left ajar, the lawful owner and Superior of these monastic premises was enabled to enter them and secure the door behind him, before any of those within were even aware of his presence.

Dirt and disorder reigned everywhere, and the first human being that his eyes lighted on was his poor sheepish-looking supplanter, who, in polished boots, an immaculate white collar, and his own Cross of Office, presented a picture of the most piteous yet ludicrous incongruity that it is possible to conceive. Disgusted and angry as the Reverend Father must naturally have been, the sight of his successor was too much for him! "Brother," he said, with an uncontrollable burst of laughter, "how could you let them make such a fool of you? Go at once and take off those ridiculous things, and come back and speak to me." Crestfallen and ashamed, the depressed "Abbot" retired with his borrowed plumes, and, having shed them, returned to face his destiny.

It is but fair to state that, with the exceptions of Maurus and Stanislaus, whose further misdeeds will be dealt with in due time and place, the Elm Hill insurrection was snuffed out with a single application of the extinguisher.

Father Ignatius had not been an hour in the house before one and all were literally at his feet, entreating pardon, and promising sincere amendment at the price of "one more chance." Each delinquent seemed to throw the brunt of the blame on the shoulders of one or other of his fellow-Novices, but amid the complex maze of charge and counter-charge the Reverend Father was forced to conclude that between the two middle-aged and highly respectable "suspects" the sceptre of ringleadership really rested. In accordance with this deduction, he drew up his penal code—a very temperate one, considering the flagrancy of the act which provoked its promulgation.

Maurus and Stanislaus were to be summarily expelled. The rest were to be accorded a free pardon, and encouraged to begin a new and better life—thus verifying, though only in part, the words of the prophetic Sister who foretold the forgiveness of sins all round.

The grave and learned sitters on the Magisterial Bench had treated the *plaidoirie* of the monastic discontents with summary wet blankets. Both Maurus and Stanislaus were heard to the bitter end, and their quietus followed quickly. "Gentlemen," said suavely the master of the legal ceremonies, "your case falls unfortunately through. The vows which you have taken to the Reverend Father Ignatius as your chosen and elected Superior are voluntary, not coercive. You did not take the leap in the dark, but in the broad daylight of mature age and enlightened education. Those who become Monks dedicate themselves to a life of spontaneous self-sacrifice. You have absolutely no case, not even the shadow of one, either against the Reverend Father, or his Porter, who is held by the same promise of obedience which you yourselves have made, and are evidently desirous of violating. The summons is dismissed." And with this uncompromising snub, the guilty pair were ushered out of court. Their next move was to the Monastery, where they found the Superior in possession, and by his orders the door shut in their faces.

This was a climax of which they had never dreamed,

and, knowing too well the Reverend Father's keen susceptibility to pity and commiseration, they did not give up hope of reconciliation, could they play their cards at leisure. Judging from the standpoint of diplomacy, they felt that a clerical advocate might enhance their chances of success, so to Mr. Hillyard they carried the story of their woes, beseeching with plausible ingenuity his intercession on their behalf—a favour which, in spite of his strained relations with the Superior, the Rector of St. Lawrence did not see fit to refuse.

Father Ignatius was, however, inexorable. He had had time to fathom the depths of the infamous intrigue, and for the sake of the few weaklings who had perhaps been more sinned against than sinning, he determined to wield the hyssop until the utmost speck of uncleanness should be purged out. Both ringleaders begged hard for re-admission, but to no avail. They were forthwith sent about their business, Stanislaus taking with him on his vagabondage a boy from the St. William's Guild, whom a few weeks later he persuaded to follow him from Norwich. This last detail is an all-important one, for it furnishes the keynote to many a dark and dreadful hour in the Father's future life. These events will receive their necessary emphasis as contemporary narrative shall require. At the moment I only register them as shadows—very black shadows, which in later pages must be invoked in a sadly substantial and threatening shape.

It is my endeavour to count as nearly as possible the links of continuity, reserving each momentous knot in the chain of events for its own ripeness of evolution. In this intention, therefore, I shall merely add to this page the concluding clause, that with the expulsion of Stanislaus and Maurus, the Reverend Father was under the charitable delusion that he had effectually swept and garnished his cherished Monastery—freed it, in fact, from the faintest whiff of the pollution which the presence of these two malefactors must needs have infused into its atmosphere.

The adjustment of the Elm Hill mutiny was the matter

of an hour or so. Once again in the heart of his Community, the Reverend Father had no difficulty in asserting his old sway. Including the hypocritical cringings of the two chief instigators, I have before me (too lengthy for reproduction) the written apologies of the whole crew of rebels, their prayers for forgiveness, and abject promises to live in penitence for the terms of their natural existences. I must not close this folio without explaining to the reader the precise purport and extent of the conspiracy, which but for very special Interposition must inevitably have ended in the Reverend Father's death.

Amongst other minor details, Maurus and Stanislaus had planned the murder of the man whom they feared and hated. The confessions of the repentant Brothers all confirmed this monstrous fact. Upon his return he was to have been seized, locked into a cellar, and left there to die by slow starvation, a solemn procession headed by the Chaplain having been arranged to conduct him with mock ceremony to his living grave. The construction of so diabolical a plot in the peaceful days of nineteenth-century civilisation, sounds more like the climax of some morbidly fantastic penny dreadful than a hard and fast reality, built up stone by stone by the wickedness of two middle-aged individuals wearing the sacred habit of the bodyguard of God.

Nevertheless this enormity was a fact, and it was not the only outrage that these villains had conceived. They had robbed the tabernacle of its Divine Occupant. When the Reverend Father went into the church, he found the Blessed Sacrament missing, and on asking who had dared tamper with so holy a possession, the unhappy Novices were obliged to confess the truth. The consecrated Hosts had been buried in the garden, and the contents of the Chalice poured over them into the ground. To the already grief-stricken Superior this was the deepest wound of all. These impious hands had reached even into his Holy of Holies and touched his Master's throne. The thought of so dire an outrage pierced him through and through. Sorrowfully

the conscience-laden Brothers led him into the familiar garden, and pointed to the sacred spot where the newly-turned earth told its silent history. Reparation was now the only offering that could presume to wipe the tears from the Hidden Face, and to such impassioned reparation as lay within his mortal efforts did the faithful Monk bend all the concentrated fervour of his body, soul, and spirit. Lights were lighted round the small enclosure, a crimson chalice veil spread upon the place, and flowers—every sweet and fragrant bloom that could be obtained—strewn profusely around. It was all that man could do—and it was done. I have had this same chalice veil in my hands. It still bears the dark finger-marks which Mother Earth engraved upon it when it lay upon her bosom as the shroud of her buried Lord.

A few hours after the barring of the Monastery gates against the renegades Maurus and Stanislaus, and the bestowal of a free pardon to their less guilty and penitent Brethren, the Reverend Father set himself lustily to work, to repair the more mundane breaches in his walls. In this emergency, soap and water, brooms and hearthstone, had to be strenuously invoked, and inasmuch as the reinstated Novices seemed more or less paralysed by the sense of their own shortcomings and their Superior's unprecedented clemency, the brunt of these manual labours fell to the hands that could least support them—the Reverend Father's own.

The whole Monastery was in a state of uncleanness beyond description. It happened, too, to be the Vigil of an important Feast, so the necessity for a thorough spring cleaning out of season was imperative. The doorsteps—and there were many, for the Priory buildings were scattered and extensive—in especial gave him a long stretch of hard work before they could be restored to their pristine spotlessness. Clad in a coarse apron, and armed with hearthstone and bucket, the Superior engaged in a prolonged personal combat with the dust and footprints of a whole week's traffic—a proceeding which called forth a storm of protest from the female portion of his opposite neighbours, who

with one accord sallied forth in a body, and almost with tears besought him to let them take his place. But he would not !

“ If I am to teach those poor Brothers to take heart and begin life afresh,” said he, “ the least I can do is to lead the way, by showing them a bit of grit myself.”

The spirit was indeed willing, but as an unlucky counterpoise, the weakness of the flesh was very great.

CHAPTER XXVII

"FEAR NOT! I AM WITH THEE"

"A Guardian Angel send us
From Thy sweet Land of Love,
To tell us peaceful stories
Of Things above."

THE cleaning of those celebrated doorsteps was destined to be the last piece of manual labour which the Reverend Father's hands were to accomplish for many a long day to come. A sleepless night followed the spasmodic gathering up of every fibre, nervous and mental, necessary to the encounter of events such as had landmarked the course of the few preceding hours. Insomnia is a distressing symptom from which the Reverend Father has endured many interludes of negative suffering, ever since the St. Paul's tragedy referred to in his boyish days, when the whole current of his nerve-life seems to have been turned adrift, or uprooted and cast whirling into strange and dangerous eddies.

It wanted but a feather's weight to consummate the destruction of that eventful 23rd of August 1865, and this night of wakefulness stepped readily into the breach. On the following morning—the Feast of St. Bartholomew—the Monk arose unrested and exhausted, every nervous centre vibrating painfully, as though held in tension by red-hot wires. Every sound was an agony to him, each thought a painful effort, while, to add to his burden, the responsibility of the heavy midday service rested entirely on himself. The resident Chaplain, albeit one of the penitent and pardoned mutineers, could not as yet be permitted to resume his place at the altar he had dishonoured, therefore

it devolved upon the Superior to take the lead in church. Solemn ante-Communion Service was to be given at 11 o'clock, and at the appointed hour, more dead than alive, the Reverend Father struggled to his post, and strove to fulfil the duty for which he was so utterly unfit.

It was of no avail. A deadly faintness seemed to seize him in every limb, and the very sound of his own voice came wafted back to him as though blown through muffled reed pipes from some shadowy far-away.

In the outer church a sufficiently numerous but somewhat scattered congregation was gathered. Being a week-day, and not a Festival of Obligation, the usual Sunday crowd was wanting, many of the good Norwich citizens being constrained by their business occupations to defer a more general muster till the following Sabbath-day services. But, as it was, a goodly few were assembled—a motley handful of men, women, and children—met together with one intention, that of welcoming their Superior, and testifying by their presence the sympathy they felt for him in his recent base betrayal. It may have been the emotion caused by this obvious expression of loyalty, or possibly the atmospheric absorption inseparable from any concentration of the human species, but certain it is, that before the service was three parts finished, it was brought to an abrupt and painful conclusion. The Reverend Father just managed to stagger from the altar to the Choir, which I have already described, before he collapsed supinely on the floor, to the terror of the two or three Brothers who happened to be in their respective stalls.

The Superior's condition at this critical moment is particularly difficult to describe. It would be incorrect to state that he had fainted, still more so to say that he was unconscious. To use his own words, he was somehow "*super-conscious*," that is to say, his complete prostration of nerve and physical organism seemed to be mysteriously compensated and even overbalanced by an acute mental vision—a strange and potential inner sight from which all human veils seemed rent asunder, all mortal scales lifted

away. In his bodily being he believed himself to be dying. Speech and movement were out of his power, and on his nerveless hands he recalls the fact that the skin appeared to hang in white flaccid folds. Yet in his inner self he was strung to an abnormal pitch of psychical intensity. He could see the sights unseen, fathom the Great Beyond, and almost interpret the Voice of the Many Waters, which we in our pitiful ignorance are constrained to call Silence.

How long he remained in this almost deathlike state, lying helplessly on his back in the Monks' Choir, it is impossible to conjecture. In all probability the Brothers concluded that he had fainted, and dispersed to seek help and get a message conveyed to the doctor, who unfortunately did not happen to be amongst the congregation in the secular church. The Reverend Father's recollections on these minor points are hazy, but on the one stupendous event which occurred during this clouded interim his memory is lucid in every detail. There is no discrepancy, no hesitation, in the story he tells of his rescue from a malignant demon by the visible Interposition of the Lord Jesus Christ.

"Whether I was actually alone at the moment," says the Monk, "I cannot possibly affirm, and it matters little. What I *can* declare is, that while lying there, and expecting, as I confidently did, each breath to be my last, I saw face to face two supernatural presences—the one, an angel of darkness, probably one of the lower angels from the infernal kingdom, and the other, the Lord Jesus Himself, who in His Divine Compassion, and as a convincing proof of His Identity, condescended to appear under the conventional likeness with which His children in the world are so lovingly familiar.

"What an astounding parallel! A sordid, hideous-looking demon, and the King of Kings in His Beauty—the Beauty of the Only Begotten, full of Grace and Light!

"I had just strength enough left to turn my head, with an aimless kind of appeal, when in the angle of the opposite corner I saw a strange-looking being standing, looking at

me fixedly. His back was three parts turned upon me, but his face was thrown over his shoulder, and I can recall its features vividly. The impression I received was instantaneous and appalling. I knew I was in presence of a demon, and I felt that he had come to torment me in my last hour. The appearance of this creature was peculiar in the extreme. In point of stature he could not have measured over four feet, and his whole frame was grotesquely square, but powerfully built. I can only describe his head as being similar to a turnip; it was over-sized, hairless and unnatural in shape, and the face it accompanied seemed cast in the same mould. Pallid and ill-shapen, it was revolting to look upon, but it was the cold malignity that it embodied which gave the real note of horror to the apparition. The hatred and triumph written on that face are impossible to express. Every second that passed, I expected the creature to leap upon me, or blast me with his breath—so much so that in my agony I closed my eyes, and commended my soul to the One and Only, before Whom the hosts of Hell lay down their weapons, like children's toys.

“As I did so, the Voice of my soul rose up within me, and, weak and weary as I was, the words fell clearly and bell-like, as some far-away chime on a cool, calm night. ‘Look up,’ It said gently, and as I listened I felt as it were strong gentle Hands take possession of me, and actually raise me to an easier posture, my head being supported on some tangible resting-place, which somehow made me remember my childish days and the peaceful shelter of my mother's arms. ‘Look up,’ reiterated the Voice, ‘and fear not, for I am with thee.’

“Then I opened my eyes—the demon had disappeared—and I looked up to see a Face bending tenderly over me—the Face of Jesus—I knew it in an instant—the Face of my Lord and my God. Part of the Divine Figure was likewise visible, but being behind me, I was unable to define Its proportions. I had nevertheless the exquisite sensation of feeling that ‘underneath me were the Ever-

lasting Arms'; but it was the Face looking down into mine that seemed to call me back into life from the very borderland of the Valley of the Shadow. Yes, I have indeed seen Jesus! Weak and unworthy as I am, I have 'looked on Him whom they pierced,' not through a glass darkly, but actually face to face. *Deo gratias!*"

This Vision must have been of short duration, but the Reverend Father recalls the fact that the withdrawal of the Presence Visible was in itself a crowning mystery. The Face of Jesus neither faded gradually nor flashed suddenly out of sight. It simply "ceased to be seen"—to use the Monk's own words when recounting the phenomenon.

When the Brothers, accompanied by the doctor, returned to the Choir, they found their Superior lying prostrate as they had left him, but in full possession of all his faculties. His bodily weakness was so great that, on being assisted to his feet, he could neither walk nor stand. His condition of attenuation may be imagined when I add, that to simplify matters, the doctor who was neither a particularly tall nor powerful man, was able to pick him up as if he had been a child, and carry him easily not only out of church, but upstairs to his own bed, where he was laid in a state of absolute exhaustion that was pitiful to see.

Very serious complications followed, and the patient became so ill that it was considered necessary to call in an experienced nurse to superintend the ministrations of Brothers Philip and Edmund—two faithful Novices who had remained loyal throughout the rebellion, and between whom the watches in the sickroom were more devotedly than altogether skilfully kept. Sister Mary Magdalene, of the Sisterhood of Mount Calvary, was the person chosen as the fittest candidate for so responsible a post, and her installation was quickly effected, with most beneficial consequences.

It was no easy matter to nurse the sick Monk back into his overweighted, never-resting groove of existence. Nerves and vital force seemed at last to be gone beyond recall, and to add to the sum of difficulties, the Community purse was at its ebb-tide. The thieves had taken every

penny of the little store of savings put aside so carefully for the eventuality of a rainy day; and the current allowance doled out for weekly expenses was quite inadequate to keep the Monastery going, and supply a sickroom dietary which was prescribed to be "little and often" of the most nourishing description.

The unexpected appearance of a bottle of champagne proved to be one of the first stepping-stones towards convalescence, and it is probable that recovery might even have been more complete had the Reverend Father known at the moment what he only learnt much later and by the merest chance—that this much needed restorative was obtained by a quiet act of self-sacrifice on the part of his devoted nurse. Sister Mary Magdalene, in desperation at the state of finances and the urgent necessity of procuring some appetising form of stimulant for her patient, determined to take the law into her own hands. She was anything but a wealthy woman, but among her few precious possessions was a certain crinoline petticoat which she counted a superfluity. So to the first available purchaser went this costly garment, and to the sickbed was carried the memorable champagne. Poor generous-souled Mary Magdalene! Some listening angel must surely have noted down her story in the Book of Golden Deeds.

And God blessed that reviving draught! It was just the one light touch needed to adjust the trembling balance of life and set it swinging with reactive rhythm.

This illness was an acute and painful one, nevertheless it was altogether a blessed time. The memory of the Vision in the Choir was in itself a delightful palliative to the most trying moments of restless wakefulness, and as this stupendous Visitation was destined to be followed by a second scarcely less amazing, the Reverend Father is constrained to regard these days of suffering as very special periods of privilege and Divine overshadowing.

By the doctor's orders, and to ensure against excitement or disturbance, the sick Monk was left a good deal to the company of his own thoughts. The windows were

kept wide open to afford him all the tonic properties of the summer air and sun, and thus for hours together he would sometimes lie and re-live the chapters of his past life, in the strange vivid fashion which great physical prostration so often suggests to those least fitted to endure the effort of reminiscence. One day, when pondering thus, God sent two angels to break the tension of his thoughts. It was midday, and more than a week had passed since they had carried him to his bed. He was wide awake at the time, and fully conscious, therefore what now follows may be accepted in its literal sense, and not as the fantastic vapour of a weak or disordered brain. Suddenly, unexpectedly, and distinctly, two radiant angels appeared in the blaze of sunshine which poured in at the open windows, and stood before him at the foot of his bed. That they were his Guardian Angels the Reverend Father is absolutely convinced, and the fact that they were *two*, is a detail which he always recalls with satisfaction and special gratitude.

"I should know my Angels' faces anywhere," he always says, when referring to this manifestation, "and I *shall* know them when my time comes for passing to the Other Side. They were bright, beautiful beings, young and comely, and as they stood and looked upon me, an indescribable atmosphere of peace seemed to diffuse itself about my bed—a warm fragrance that reached my soul with a strange emotion well-nigh impossible to convey in words.

"My first impulse was to strive to raise myself, or at least to speak some breath of reverent salutation; but my heavenly visitors had evidently divined my thoughts, for before I had time to make a movement, one of them smiled sweetly on me, and, putting his finger to his lip, made me a sign to be silent and still. There was no mistaking his significant gesture, and I had no choice but to obey. Then he smiled all the more, and leaned one hand upon the shoulder of his companion, thus giving me gracious time and opportunity to enjoy the refreshment of their presence, before taking their flight within the Veil, which except to

the eyes of faith is so seldom lifted in this world. I shall never forget this blessed visit of my Guardian Angels, my two Heaven-sent protectors! I have never seen them since, and very likely I may not see them again—at least, not in this life—but the memory of their faces, their forms, and their atmosphere will never leave me. To this day I often thank God for the glimpse He has been pleased to vouchsafe me into the blessed cloud of celestial witnesses which encompass us round about, and spread their white wings for our protection, counsel, and repose of soul.”

On the 7th of September—just one fortnight after he fell ill—the Reverend Father was sufficiently recovered to be carried out of the Monastery to the train, and conveyed to Margate, in the hopes that the magical sea breezes of this familiar but unrivalled resort might succeed where the doctor had failed, in bringing back some degree of strength and recuperative vitality to the emaciated and almost discouraged convalescent. Physical depression had much to answer for, there is little doubt, in this condition of prostration, but the moral shock of the few past weeks had even more. Immediate change of air and surroundings seemed to be the only resource left, as a means of complete and lasting recovery, but, like many other medical prescriptions, it was not easy of execution. Mrs. Lyne happened to be abroad at the time, and knowing well the anxious tendency of his mother's mind (at any rate where he was concerned), the Monk would not have her informed of his break-down. Such news would, he felt convinced, bring her post-haste to Norwich, and to avoid such a contingency he determined to say nothing of his troubles, but simply set his teeth and face the music, no matter what tune might strike up.

The Reverend Father's friends in Norwich, however, were determined not to let him die if they could help it. No sooner had the doctor opined that a change was imperative, than a general “scraping up” of stray pennies ensued. With the aid of many combined efforts, an expedition to Margate was arranged—the party to consist of

the Superior, Sisters Louisa, Veronica, and Ambrosia, and Brother Edmund, who with the infant Samuel completed the group.

In this way a most successful journey to Margate was accomplished, the patient showing marked symptoms of improvement in an incredibly short time. Kingsgate was the next point in the itinerary, and here a whole month was passed. Amongst the by-the-way notes of this period, I must not forget to mention that by special invitation of the Ramsgate Plymouth Brethren, the Reverend Father went over to their own town and addressed them—a remarkable item in a Monk’s diary. After a while, the desire to move on still farther seemed to move him, and in his endeavour to select a sympathetic spot as the climax of his proposed travels, the remembrance of the far-away ruins in the valley of the Black Mountains came back upon him like a flash of inspiration, and in a moment his thoughts centred on one cherished ambition—a pilgrimage to Old Llanthony Priory, and if God saw fit to give him strength, a Mission to the dwellers amongst the distant Welsh hills.

Father Ignatius has never yet been dilatory in making things hum! No sooner had he conceived this new project, than he set about seeing it through. It was now October, and with the purpose of returning to his Monastery for Advent pre-eminently foremost in his anticipations, he felt that he had little time to spare.

On the 31st of October, therefore, having met a party of eleven members of the Third Order at Bristol the same day, the pilgrimage arrived at its destination, and on the following Sunday the Reverend Father preached to an astonished and much mystified Welsh congregation in the hotel coach-house, which had formerly been the sacristy of the ancient Priory. The impressions of these primitive valley-folk must have been worth recording, as they took their first unconscious peep at the man who in a few short years was to build up his own Monastery in their midst, and make Llanthony a name of controversy and consolation in the ears of widespread Christendom. There are those still

alive who remember that first Llanthony sermon, and are proud and happy to speak of it! One dear old woman, with whom I have had many a nice talk on the subject, always reverts to the occasion as one of the bright hours of her life. She had never seen a Monk before, and had no idea what such an incarnation would be like, but at the sight of the pale delicate-looking young man who presented himself, in his strange black robes and sandals, her kind motherly heart went out to him at once with a great throb of sympathy, for which she could in no wise account. When he had done preaching, her feelings could be restrained no longer. "I don't know what possessed me," she has often said to me, "but I had to go up and shake hands with him. My husband laughed at me for it afterwards, but I couldn't help myself. 'Thank you very much, sir,' I said, as we shook hands with the heartiness of two old friends, and he just smiled down upon me—that was all."

The snow-tipped fingers of Time have been busy since that day, and in this age of conventional simulation it is especially pleasant to add that this homely clasp of hands has never since been loosed. The young stranger-Monk is now the acknowledged and almost worshipped potentate of the Vale of Ewyas, and his enthusiastic friend of auld lang syne seems to be still of the same devoted turn of mind, for it was only a few days since that she assured me, with tears in her eyes, "that to serve the dear Reverend Father she would willingly crawl up the Valley on her knees."

The Advent season of 1865 saw the Superior back at Norwich, and endeavouring to take up the thread of his interrupted work. His return was celebrated by the faithful as a triumphant jubilee, and fervent hopes were entertained far and near that the wheels of the Elm Hill Priory routine might once more resume their busy whirr. The Reverend Father made a desperate effort to rise to the emergency. Under his supervision, bills were paid, things temporal and spiritual carefully adjusted, and as far as possible the daily parable taken up where the page was turned down to mark time. But it was evident to all who

saw him, that the Superior's strength was at an alarmingly low ebb, and although at times carried through fatigue by a feverish exhilaration, his moments of reaction were frequent and overwhelming. Nevertheless, he struggled on bravely, even to the bitter end. Towards the close of the year a severe relapse of his former illness ensued, and he was once more reduced to a state of absolute prostration, which gave rise to the gravest anticipations on the part of his kind friend and adviser, Dr. Allen.

By this gentleman's directions, the Reverend Father was removed from his own cell to a quiet room in the St. William's Guild portion of the Priory. These Guild premises did not overlook the thoroughfare, but only a comparatively sequestered courtyard, and they were therefore considered by the doctor as suitable for the bestowal of a patient whose condition required surrounding with the utmost tranquillity it was possible to arrive at. This time the sickroom was put under the charge of a trained nurse, an elderly widow, who has already been named in the Llanthony pilgrimage as Sister Ambrosia.

And now it was the moment for Norwich to be plunged in the deepest grief. Dr. Allen made no secret of the gravity of the case. Even if the Superior should recover—and he expressed his forecast in an ominously conditional tense—it was impossible that he should attempt any work, even of the lightest, for at least a year to come. A sea voyage, or a prolonged stay abroad, would be about the best means to be contemplated as aids to complete recovery, but that was for the future. At the moment, quiet, nourishment, and careful nursing were the only things to be studied, together with absence of all sources of agitation or anxiety.

On the last evening of the year, the Reverend Father's exhaustion was so great, that Sister Ambrosia, who was watching at his bedside, believed him to be actually dying. Suddenly at midnight, at the very moment when the two years meet—the Old one passing away to his long rest, the New springing pitilessly into the vacant chair of his

shadowy predecessor—the sick Monk raised himself and bade the Sister open his window wide. “The angels are singing,” he whispered ecstatically; “cannot you hear them, Sister Ambrosia?” “No, dear Father,” she answered gently; “I hear nothing at all.” Nevertheless, she went to the window and opened it, partly in deference to a sick man’s fancy, and also to hide the tears that were streaming from her own eyes, for she felt that her Superior had received his call.

Having complied with his request, the kind Sister returned to her post as watcher, but silently and softly, for the expression on the Monk’s face was one which she would not have dared question. He was the first to speak. “Can you not hear them *now*?” he asked her breathlessly, as she seated herself at his pillow, and for truth’s sake she was forced to reply as before, “I hear nothing!” “How strange!” he murmured to himself, “how strange, when I can hear so distinctly a great wave of harmony that rises and falls with the breath of a myriad heavenly voices!” Once more Sister Ambrosia sought to interpose. “Dear Father, it is past midnight; not a sound is stirring.” But the Father shook his head. “Not only can I hear them singing, but the very words that leave their lips. ‘Make us love Thee more and more!’ That is what the angels are saying in their psalm, over and over again. It is dying gradually away in the distance . . . softer and softer every moment. Why do you cry, Sister Ambrosia? Close the window now—the song is finished.”

Only much later, when convalescence had fairly set in, did the good Sister tell him the cause of her tears. She had thought that her dear Father’s soul would have flown to heaven with that music, and, woman-like, she wept in anticipation of her grief.

But it was an anthem of resurrection that the angel hosts had sung! With the dawn of the New Year a change for the better manifested itself in the Monk’s condition, and from that hour the Reverend Father slowly but steadily achieved a most unexpected partial recovery.

Neither the purport nor measure of that angelic chorus has ever died out of his heart. To this day, in Llanthony Church, "the Angels' Chant" is sung on all High Festivals by the Monks and Nuns of the Community, as an appropriate salutation to the Holy Gospel, whose reverent reading forms one of the principal periods in the Ordinary of the Mass.

CHAPTER XXVIII

“MINE OWN FAMILIAR FRIEND”

“O Love of Jesus, shield us
Through the still night's lone hour ;
From our worst foes protect us,
With wondrous power.”

FOR the sake of grouping together in a sympathetic atmosphere the three supernatural phenomena recorded in the last chapter, I have with intention somewhat eddied out of the unbroken current of sequence. It has been my desire to present these occasions of privilege like precious gems kept apart for single setting at their manipulator's hand.

According to the strict code of narration, I have already reached the date of January 1866, on the first day of which month (the dawn of the New Year) our Reverend Father had been sung back to convalescence by the mysterious waft of the Choir Celestial that had breathed the breath of life into his weak and weary frame. Running crab-fashion through the contemporary landmarks, I must ask the reader to recall the visit of the Guardian Angels in the month of August 1865, and the Vision in the Monks' Choir on St. Bartholomew's Day of the same year. Retrograding still further, we come to the Superior's return to Norwich, after the disgraceful mutiny of his unfaithful Brothers, and at this point—the Eve of the Assumption—I am going to call a halt, in order to chronicle an event which, from its disastrous and mundane nature, I have refrained from associating with the sacred details of angelic songs and ministrations.

No offence can at any time be more repulsive than a

cold-blooded and premeditated fraud. When the offender happens to be a professing preacher and practiser of the Ten Commandments—a minister of God who chooses for his victim the friend that trusts him—surely the utter degeneracy of such an act passes words. "Mine own familiar friend in whom I trusted . . . hath lifted up his heel against me."

If ever mortal man had the right to raise this bitter cry and send it mingling with the blood of Abel, that man is the Reverend Father Ignatius, when his thoughts stray back to his once-time friend, and subsequent arch-enemy—the traitor who by a cunning subterfuge robbed him not only of his Monastery, but likewise by the suction of a protracted lawsuit, of the reversion of every penny to which he would become entitled under the disposition of his wealthy cousin's (Mr. Lyne Stephens') will. The circumstances were on this wise.

It will be remembered that when the Reverend Father entered Elm Hill Priory in the first instance, he had already paid an advance instalment of the £500 purchase-money to the amount of £50. A considerable debt therefore remained to be cleared by means of gradual payments, the only means in the Monk's power of meeting the gathering together of so large a sum. The news of this financial difficulty, however, struck a generous note of sympathy in the heart of a kindly Suffolk lady, a certain spinster who had already shown considerable interest in the Benedictine Community during its infant days in the Rectory wing at Claydon. She readily promised to modify the emergency by lending the required sum for an indefinite period, and minus interest—two important conditions of which the Reverend Father could not fail to be keenly appreciative. Once the offer made and accepted, its confirmation only needed the handing over of the funds, and the signing by the Superior of a formal receipt, whereby he should acknowledge the delivery of the loan into the possession of its appointed receivers, under the express conditions which involved its future repayment. It was therefore as a matter

of course that the Reverend Father received a casual notice from his so-called "friend," intimating that on the afternoon of the 14th of August, he himself, together with two well-known lawyers from an adjacent town, would run over to Norwich, bringing with them the legal receipt, which only needed the Reverend Father's signature for the money, to be then and there deposited in the hands of the Ecclesiastical Commissioners who represented the Cathedral authorities—the original proprietors of the Monastery premises.

Close upon the heels of this letter came the triumvirate of rogues. Being the Eve of the Assumption, and the Priory Community not only small, but scarcely reinstated after the upheaval of the recent mutiny, no more unfortunate date could have been chosen for the transaction of business of any kind. Already overweighted with the burden, physical and mental, of putting things to rights, and generally oiling the interrupted engines of his monastic organisation, the preparations for the morrow's Festival were in themselves a labour beyond the reach of the Monk's single pair of hands. When the chief aggressor and his red-tape satellites arrived upon the scene, the entire Monastery was upside down, and its Superior's presence in requisition in at least a dozen places at once. It was only in snatches of conversation, broken every minute by messages or calls from without, that the Reverend Father was able to interpret the apparent purpose of this plausible deputation. In the Priory at the time was also one of the Monk's most faithful supporters and followers—a much-respected Norwich solicitor and magistrate—but so implicit was this gentleman's belief in those who had formulated the deed in question, that he never dreamed of advising his friend to examine it, before endorsing it with his name.

The preliminaries duly arranged, and the Reverend Father having received satisfactory answers to the few questions he asked respecting his own obligations, the signing of the receipt was the work of a moment. Important note must be made of the fact that all the explanatory

information given by the two lawyers during this fatal quarter of an hour was *viva voce*, not documentary. Never once did they hand the paper to the Monk for perusal, neither did he demand it. So complete was his confidence in the villains with whom he was dealing, and so lamentable his own natural inability to master the business side of no matter how simple a transaction, that his one object was to abridge the interview and hurry off to the hundred and one duties which were waiting him on every side. No sooner did the actual signing of the deed become imminent, than the wily priest absented himself from the room; but so supreme was the Reverend Father's trust in the man who was not only his chosen adviser, but in Dr. Pusey's absence his spiritual director and confessor, that this significant action awoke in him no suspicion of the real motive of the move. Turning to the legal conspirators, he remarked half jokingly, "I hope you don't expect me to read through all that rigmarole? Just tell me where to sign my name and let me be off." But at this juncture one of the "honest" lawyers took the pen from his hand. "Reverend Father," he ventured to suggest, "there is one small condition which my client the generous spinster instructs me to impose, as a *sine quâ non* to the payment of this loan. She asks you to bind yourself under a promise that you will never again leave the Reserved Sacrament in your absence, except in the charge of some devout person who would safeguard It, in case of need, from sacrilege." To this very reasonable and edifying request the Superior acquiesced without hesitation; upon which, having duly received the required assurance, the lawyer once more handed him the pen, saying blandly as he did so, "Now, Reverend Father, I may let you sign at once." The fatal deed being finally placed before him, carefully folded down so as only to expose the blanks awaiting his own signature and those of the witnesses, Father Ignatius affixed his name to it, thus unconsciously but deliberately signing the warrant of his own ruin, and blindly playing into the hands of those who were to reap the benefit of so mad and sad a misplacement of sacred trust and confidence.

Only nearly a year later, and under circumstances which will be better expressed in their own page of continuity, did the unhappy Monk realise that the friend of his heart, the director of his soul, was no better—nay, even worse than a common pickpocket, and that he himself was a penniless wanderer on the face of the earth, his Monastery a house of cards, and his poor fellow-Monks mere deluded beggars, who, like their Superior, must henceforward trust to God and charity for the very bread on which their future lives would depend.

The document to which the Reverend Father had set his signature was very simple in its significance. All the explanatory flourishes volunteered by the accomplice lawyers were nothing but the professional “gag” of a carefully rehearsed eventuality. The deed was a lease, not a receipt. Under its conditions, the familiar priest-friend became absolute owner and proprietor of Elm Hill Priory, the Monk Ignatius figuring only as his yearly tenant—to be dismissed at will, with a six weeks’ notice.

The barefaced infamy of such a sordid fraud needs no commentary. That its sting, so far as the Reverend Father is concerned was self-inflicted, is scarcely an extenuating argument for the defence, yet in a measure it carries weight. The reckless insanity of signing any document whatsoever without first mastering its contents, is a patent fatality which it is vain to attempt to ignore, nevertheless in the case in point, this suicidal impulse should surely have been less preposterous than in the usual ninety-nine instances of the way of the world. This priest was well known to be the Reverend Father’s intimate friend and adviser, one of the actual pillars of his monastic career, and the first who had held out a helping hand in the days when the Community was penniless and homeless, and the whole scheme of Revival likely to burst like a bubble for want of means to turn its wheels.

It is impossible to define or even conjecture the cause of such heart-breaking treachery and desertion in so zealous a former benefactor. Surmise can only suggest a

sudden whirlwind of temptation—some seductive glimpse of the Golden Calf that had blotted out the image of the God of Israel, the Law-giver of Sinai who had said "Thou shalt not steal." No absolutely personal motive can well be attributed to so abominable and sudden a degeneracy. That it was an expansion of some secret vendetta would be difficult to believe. We all know that money-madness is a species of mania which spreads like the plague spot through the Egypt of the human race, and it needs no seer to tell us that its contagion spares not even the first-born of the Christian Family. It is therefore kindest, and perhaps even wisest, to leave so introspective a detail in its grave. This man has already appeared before his Judge, and death has dimmed, even if it cannot wipe out, the entry of his shortcomings from the great Black Board of Memory.

Those who desire to study the robbery of the Elm Hill Priory at greater length, may do so by referring to the leading Press files at intermittent intervals during the years 1866 to 1878. Over ten years of hopeless litigation, to which the Reverend Father was goaded by the entreaties of his own father and the Archbishop of Canterbury, closed this miserable transaction. The case was tried by Sir Alexander Cockburn, Sir George Jessel being the counsel retained as the Monk's advocate. It was of no avail. Red-tapeism was bound to crush the Great Unwritten Law, and when in process of time the Reverend Father was literally paying out his last farthing in order to defray his lawyer's bill, that individual (who was also his personal friend) besought him urgently to spend no more money in pleading a cause which, though just and equitable, presented technical weaknesses which even the most astute advocacy was impotent to compensate. This lawyer-friend—a well-known personage who for obvious reasons must remain unnamed—concluded his exhortation with the following significant words: "Father Ignatius, let me beg of you to waste no more money in useless proceedings. In your case the lawyers themselves are so deeply implicated that no

judge in England will let the matter come before an open Court." Rather a scathing criticism from a Brother of the Tape, but one which perhaps points to more than a few dark spots on the finger-tips of "white-handed Justice."

Be this as it may, the result of the forecast went far to prove the logic of the prophecy. The chief witness on the Father's side was the Norwich lawyer, who like himself had been completely hoodwinked by the plausibility of the plot. He had even stood by and suffered the Monk to affix his name to the deed, on the hypothetical strength of the unimpeachable prestige which the mere name of the priest in question carried both in the Monastery and in the minds of all connected with the Reverend Father's interests. It was to this one man's emphatic statement given under oath, of the real circumstances and suppositions under which the Superior's signature was obtained, that the entire case for the plaintiff had to look for the props and pillars of its arguments; but even this solemn testimony, coming from the highly-respected source it did, was unable to shake the technical validity of a legally attested name. The Norwich magistrate was simply judged to have played second-fiddle dupe to the Reverend Father's lead, and the case was forthwith dismissed as being one for private arbitration rather than the public court.

As I have already observed, those who wish to know more of this unfortunate conflict can easily do so by reading up the Law Reports of the time. These records will furnish a complete list of names and other minutiae which for the sake of Christian charity are expressly eliminated from these pages.

It is not to be supposed that the priestly aggressor, once having closed the web about his unsuspecting victim, was long in asserting his supremacy. Armed with his newly-signed lease, his first step was to demand the title-deeds of the agent in whose hands the Reverend Father had deposited them after the purchase transaction of the Monastery buildings had been completed, nearly two years

previously. The document of the lease was so thoroughly *en règle*, and the priest so widely known to be the Monk's most intimate friend and confidant, that without a moment's hesitation the deeds of possession were surrendered at his request. Not, however, until the Superior was far away in Italy, *en route* for Palestine, did the wily usurper make a single step towards declaring his real position, or proceed to the ejection of his deeply-wronged tenant. It was only on his return to England in the June of the following summer, that the Reverend Father became aware of the infamous plot of which he had been the object, and even then, by his own father's intervention, the tidings were kept from him as long as possible, for fear of their effect on his already serious condition of health.

With a comparatively easy mind, therefore, and most certainly with no suspicion of the overwhelming cloud of misery that was gathering above his defenceless head, the Monk left Norwich once more in the early part of January 1866, with the view of recruiting his strength at some quiet seaside place, before attempting to follow Dr. Allen's prescription of a prolonged tour or sea voyage—an undertaking for which at that moment he had neither strength nor the necessary means in hand. The doctor was, however, determined to get his patient away as soon as possible, and when barely convalescent he persuaded him to leave Norwich at once, and go to Lowestoft, there to recover completely at leisure, and deliberate on future plans in an atmosphere of ozone and absence of all causes of nerve agitation or responsibility. These periods of enforced inaction have always been milestones of torture in the Monk's life, and in this instance the inward friction was almost unbearable. His anxiety for his young Community, added to the shock of the events of the last few months, made his absence from Norwich a thing to be lamented in every sense, but there was no help for it. "If he was ever," said Dr. Allen, "to resume work, he must rest body and mind for an indefinite time, otherwise he could not answer for the consequences."

The Lowestoft party consisted of the Superior, Sister Ambrosia, his faithful nurse, the little oblate Ignatius, and a young Brother—Brother Edmund, to whom the Father was much attached.

It may interest my readers to know something of the movements of Maurus and Stanislaus during this act of the drama. When the Reverend Father dismissed them in August 1865, he gave each a five-pound note, in order that they might reach their families or destinations of choice in comfort and security. Considering the poverty of the Priory coffers, this charitable gift was a very generous one, and what is more, it was totally undeserved. Armed with these funds, the two accomplices went over to Paris, assailed the English chaplain of that city with a cleverly perverted history of their experiences under the rule of the Anglican Monk, and induced this easily-imposed-upon clergyman to write to the Reverend Father in a strain which, had it not been induced by Christian intentions, would have been positively impertinent. To good Mr. Robins' peremptory exhortation to "take back these holy men of God," the Monk returned the quietus of an outline of their general conduct during the time they had honoured his Community. Throwing down their cards in Paris, and feeling that for the moment at least the game was up, this worthy pair separated, Stanislaus disappearing for a while, and Maurus seeking distinction as the curate of St. Martin's, Worcester, on the strength of the Reverend Father's letters of Orders, which by means of some chemical application he had managed very cleverly to transfer into his own name. Ten years later, when this veteran impostor was condemned to a long term of imprisonment for the perpetration of some still more startling fraud, the Assizes of Worcester restored the mutilated certificate to its rightful owner, together with a gentle suggestion that in future the Reverend Father should be more careful in his storage of important documents. Amongst the barefaced escapades of Brother Maurus while wearing the clerical domino, may be mentioned the joining together in holy matrimony of no

less than three-and-thirty couples. It is likewise a significant footnote, that when his mask was removed by the fingers of the law, and the obligations of these mock ceremonies thereby legally pulverised, only four happy pairs out of the whole cluster expressed a wish to renew their vows before a *bond fide* priest. The rest, it was rumoured, seemed rather relieved than otherwise by an unexpected opportunity of shuffling out of uncongenial ties.

As a future page will show, the villainies of Stanislaus and Maurus hailed from totally opposite poles. The former was altogether a low type of creation mentally and morally, therefore his vices never lifted him above the gutter level; but the latter was of a sadder category still—a capable man gone wrong. Perhaps of the two, his offences, though less brutal, were the most innately guilty, for he was an apostate from better things, while his fellow-sinner—scum of the earth though he was—could at least plead the extenuating clauses of ignorance, social degradation, and a total deprivation of those redeeming associations which lift humanity from the plane of beasts to a condition that is only a little lower than the angels. The lives of these two men present a tragical study of comparison—the plebeian criminal and his patrician counterpart. Of their ultimate fate little is known save this—that Maurus has disappeared (probably gone long since to his account), and Stanislaus when last heard of was said to be living as a penitent in a Trappist Monastery far away in some remote quarter of South America.

The biographical thread now reverts to Lowestoft, and to the condition, mental and financial, of unrest and anxiety which seemed to overspread the entire horizon at this perplexing juncture of events. It is always easy for a doctor to order his patient port wine and turtle, but somewhat hard for those whose purse is light to avail themselves of his advice. It was precisely in this dilemma that the Reverend Father found himself at the heading of this chapter of his story. He felt—no one more so—the

urgent necessity of taking a complete and prolonged off-time from the cares and labours of his strenuous life, but where to turn for the means, without which it was impossible to realise such a scheme, was a problem which no one seemed able to solve. Empty pockets and full hearts very often are to be found in double harness together, and those who possess the will to rush to the rescue of emergencies, are mostly the very persons whose ability is at low water, and therefore a barren article in the sense of practical result.

But a rift in the sky was to come at last. Quite unexpectedly, the good and generous Sister Ambrosia became possessed of a considerable legacy, and her first thought was to entreat the Reverend Father to accept a small portion of it as an offering towards the payment of his necessary travelling expenses. With all the power of persuasion she could command, this excellent soul urged him to leave England without delay, and thus escape the trying winds and fogs of a cruel British winter. Not only for his own sake, said Sister Ambrosia, should he take this summary decision, but as a duty which he owed his Community, and even the entire enterprise of Anglican Monasticism, then actually dependent on his life. And on these grounds the Monk was finally talked over to avail himself of his faithful nurse's bounty.

The next stumbling-block was to choose the whither of so important an exodus—a knotty point which ultimately resolved itself in a sudden and somewhat strange manner. One particularly dull winter evening, when the Reverend Father, Sister Ambrosia, and Brother Edmund were quietly sitting over the fire in their Lowestoft lodgings, the anxious Sister felt that it was high time her patient should be sounded on so really pressing a subject as she knew his speedy removal to a warmer climate to be. "Now, dear Father," she said cheerfully, "you know it is time that you were out of England long ago. Where will you go, and when shall we start?" Almost before the words had left her lips, the Father had given her his answer. It was

simple enough, but not a little startling. "I will go to Jerusalem," he said, with something like a flash of his old energy, "and I will start to-morrow, please God."

So abrupt a conclusion to a situation which threatened to attenuate itself into the stagnation of protracted indecision would have almost annihilated most women, but luckily for Sister Ambrosia, she was cast in a level-headed mould, therefore she was able to swallow her amazement with a quick heroic gulp. Too experienced a nurse to argue with an invalid, she merely set about envisaging the feasibility of a quick march, and the possibility of breaking up the little camp on so short a notice.

Incredible as it may sound, the very next day saw the whole party at Dover, the sick Monk none the worse for his hasty journey, and his attendants anxiously awaiting a favourable sea on which they might ship him safely across Channel.

And at this point a happy coincidence occurred. As usual, one of the Monk's first impulses in all matters concerning him nearly or dearly, was to seek the advice and approbation of his valued friends, the Lady Abbess and Dr. Pusey. Before leaving Lowestoft, therefore, he managed to write a hasty line to Miss Sellon, telling her of his projected pilgrimage to the Holy City, and the almost spasmodic start which he was about to make in order to put himself without loss of time *en route*. By return of post came a kindly answer from the Lady Abbess, assuring him of her sympathy in all his terrible experiences of the last few months, and expressing the warmest wishes for the success and health-restoring efficacy of his much-needed journey of repose. This was not all. Farther on in her letter the venerable Priscilla set forth her own plans—almost identical with those of her friend the Monk. "She also," wrote this suffering invalid, "was about to visit the Land of Promise," together with one of her nuns (whom the Father believes to have been Mother Eldress Catherine) and their mutual leading light and director, the great Pusey himself. Would not the Superior join her party at Malta,

going forward to meet them by easy overland stages through France and Italy?"

It had always been one of the Reverend Father's cherished day-dreams to see Jerusalem, and the additional delight of treading the holy ground in company with such elect spirits was an anticipation—a privilege which he had never, even in his most ecstatic moments, been led to contemplate. Gratefully and fervently did he accept the golden opportunity so unexpectedly placed in his way, and it was with real human pleasure, as well as a higher and deeper emotion, that he placed before his spiritual mother the simple itinerary of his own immediate movements. He proposed to cross to Calais as soon as the weather and his own health should permit, and from thence by the Paris-Marseilles route to push forward into Italy, visiting Rome and other centres of special interest on his way South. At Valetta the two parties of pilgrims would join forces and proceed together direct to Palestine.

The squaring up of affairs at the Monastery was the work of a single letter. The Brothers in residence were given solemn charge of the Priory, its chapel and St. William's Guild, etc., and the Reverend Father decided to take with him on his lengthy journey one Novice only—the young Brother Edmund, who, with Sister Ambrosia (whose services as nurse were still indispensable) and the baby Ignatius, was to complete the group.

But at the last moment a change had to be made. Brother Philip, the Keeper-of-the-keys at Elm Hill Priory, was suddenly seized with a species of spiritual panic at the prospect of his Superior's prolonged absence, and in the anguish of his soul he telegraphed to him the following original message: "If you don't take me with you, I shall be damned." The effect of this insane outburst upon the Monk was that of a great shock.

In the Monastery, Brother Philip was honestly believed to be a rough but faithful son of St. Benedict, and for this reason his hastily worded telegram distressed the Reverend Father more than it would otherwise have done. Time

was very short, and, fearing to leave his poor morbid Novice to the mercy of his own gloomy frame of mind, he decided with sincere reluctance to send Brother Edmund home to Norwich and replace him by the less sympathetic Philip—a step which later on he had cause to regret, and that bitterly. The man’s desperation, however, overcame him altogether, and being at all times peculiarly susceptible to the appeals of the unhappy, he considered it his duty to stifle personal bias and send Brother Edmund back to Enclosure. His favourite young Novice was therefore despatched on his way to Norwich, and Brother Philip summoned as his substitute.

This was the last hindrance which threatened to postpone the final start abroad. After a week’s stay in Dover, the Channel transit was safely accomplished, a halt being made at Calais, and the journey continued after a short rest to Paris, at which point of the route the Reverend Father became so alarmingly exhausted that a stay of some days had to be endured, before he was sufficiently recovered to be moved.

There must have been a pathetic as well as picturesque aspect about this unusually garbed quartette, which even in France, where the religious dress was in those days to be seen every hour in the open street, seems to have excited a good deal of public attention. The central figure of attraction was without doubt the delicate-looking Superior robed in the sombre canonicals of his Order, but the baby Ignatius was likewise the object of much restrained mobbing. The spectacle of a three-year-old Monk in full feather is not to be seen every day, and this little child in his white serge habit and tiny sandals, was a novelty with which the passers-by seemed to be hugely mystified and pleased.

The infant Samuel and his original appearance while on this identical journey, have found their way into more than one literary corner of contemporary memorials.

Augustus Hare, for instance, has accorded him quite a front seat in a chapter devoted to his impressions of St. Peter’s, Rome. He recounts how this unique little being “pattered up the aisle” of the great church, and was lifted

by his spiritual Father to kiss the feet of the famous bronze image of St. Peter, which is the cynosure of all pilgrimages to the vast Cathedral of the Italian metropolis. Other pen-tributes have been paid to the Monk in miniature, but inasmuch as they contain absurdly exaggerated or totally inaccurate statements, they are not worth the ink that would be expended on their reproduction.

At Avignon, where on his way South the Reverend Father spent a few hours, in order to visit the Pope's Palace and other places of ecclesiastical interest, the infant Novice was the object of a public admiration not unmixed with pity. The Monastery of the Grande Chartreuse happening to be in the vicinity, the sight of the child's white habit gave the crowd a pathetic impression that he was on his way to the Carthusian Monks, and about to be offered as an oblate to this austere Order, whose Rule demands, amongst other poignant sacrifices, the observance of a Solemn Silence, which is seldom and only for brief intervals broken.

But the demonstration of the crowd was both kindly and respectful. Indeed, through the many and varied vicissitudes of this long journey the Reverend Father's experiences of the much-maligned "vile foreigner" were without exception agreeable. Even where the fame of his Anglican persuasion had gone before him, both religious and seculars overwhelmed him with polite attentions, many of them showing a deep interest in his work, which quite overstepped the microscopic-minded barriers, raised by conventional bigotry, between those who under different banners will meet in the same Fold, under the same Shepherd, and be counted *one*, at the feet of Jesus Christ.

CHAPTER XXIX

"THOU ART PETER "

" Our souls all sweetly bless,
And make this hour so sweet,
That we may truly feel
Just resting at Thy feet."

THE dominant note of this chapter will be the memorable visit paid by Father Ignatius to His Holiness Pope Pius IX., one of the central monuments of nineteenth-century Church history, and a personality of many-sided distinction. The name of the saintly Pio Nono still rings in the ear of Christendom as the embodiment of a most holy and multiplex combination of sublime qualities. As king, priest, and statesman, the entire world has sung him a requiem of unstinted praise.

Whether within the pale of his own Communion, or on the large-minded outside of it, there are few who will grudge a flower to the grave of the venerable Papa Re—the last representative of Peter, in whose kindly hand lay the Temporal Power of the Monarchy of Rome.

Had good Sister Ambrosia possessed a less elaborate but more practical knowledge of the French language, it is probable that the Monk's journey to the Papal capital would have been accomplished without a single hitch. As it was, however, the utter inability of his excellent pioneer and nurse to grapple with a foreign tongue, proved on more than one occasion to be a source of considerable perplexity and entertainment to those concerned. Sister Ambrosia herself was inclined to be sensitive on the subject. "What can you do," she said pathetically to the Reverend Father, when recounting the futility of one or other of her nego-

tiations executed in her very best Parisian,—“what *can* you do with people who don't understand their own language?” On the long and tedious journey from Lyons to Marseilles, this “obtuseness” on the part of the natives became positively serious. The Father was taken suddenly ill, and amongst other remedies to be applied, it was necessary that a hot-water bottle should be placed at his feet without delay. Nearly forty years ago, the French service of trains was not what it is to-day, and the difficulty of obtaining boiling water on board an express, and at a moment's notice, was, to say the least, considerable. But Sister Ambrosia was a woman of expediency! She bethought her of the locomotive boiler, and only waited the first halt to make an appeal to the engine-driver, whom she felt sure would readily come to the rescue of a suffering fellow-man.

No sooner did the train draw up for one of the many buffet “stops” with which, before the era of dining cars, this route was profusely punctuated, than, footwarmer in hand, this plucky lady made straight for the astonished engineer, and strove to arouse his sympathy. Great and voluble therefore was her sense of injury when, with a smile and characteristic shrug of the shoulders, this apparently hard-hearted individual gave her a look of amused wonderment, and transferred his attention to his machinery. The poor Sister was ready to cry with vexation. “The Reverend Father is *tray malarde*, can't you understand *that*?” she shouted louder than ever; “and he's got a *bezwang* for some *low show* for his *peads*.”

The amusement which the subsequent recital of this masterpiece of vocabulary occasioned the patient, when a few minutes later he was rejoined by his nurse, his footwarmer, and a truly Anglo-feminine commentary on the degeneracy of all things foreign, proved to be almost as effectual a remedy as the famous “*low show*” itself. The Reverend Father literally laughed himself out of his faintness, with the happy result that the rest of the journey was safely accomplished without further incident.

There is only one little serious landmark on this transit

across France to which I shall accord a word of mention, and that is the Reverend Father's step aside at Dijon—an act of devotion which enabled him to make a fourteen miles' pilgrimage to La Fontaine, the birthplace of St. Bernard, Patron of the Bernardine and Cistercian Orders. Over the exact spot where the Saint was born an altar has since been erected—a detail of religious interest which was thoroughly appreciated by the little company of pilgrims who had come all the way from Dijon to say a prayer at his shrine.

At Dijon itself the Father was most courteously welcomed by the Bishop of the diocese—a very distinguished and highly educated man—with whom he enjoyed a long and sympathetic talk.

On arriving at Marseilles, the overland route was exchanged for a coasting steamer, in which the party embarked for Civita Vecchia, touching Genoa and Leghorn as intermediary ports, and passing some hours on shore at each of these places. On board this boat, the Reverend Father made the acquaintance of a curious fellow-passenger—an Italian secular—who seemed to be peculiarly interested in the Anglican Monk, and to take delight in questioning him on points of doctrine where the Catholicism of both might be expected to cross swords. Amongst other astounding assertions, the garrulous stranger calmly informed his listener that a great many Italians did not believe in the Blessed Virgin, not even all the priests—a statement which sorely perplexed the Reverend Father, who imagined himself (and rightly) to be in a country where Mariolatry (at least among the peasant classes) is a cult which almost replaces direct and independent worship of the Deity. But this man, whether a professional liar, or merely the victim of his own volubility, was nevertheless an intelligent personality, and the Monk was content to index his erratic acquaintance among the many and unaccountable "human various" that somehow are always to be met with in the course of any protracted travels.

At Civita Vecchia the custom-house officers were ready

to look upon our travellers as their natural and lawful quarry. The Father's luggage was playfully ransacked from top to bottom, and duty demanded on every article conceivable and inconceivable, his crucifix included. In vain did the indignant Sister expostulate in what she believed to be the vulgate of these unconscious Italians. Not a word could they understand of her vehement vocabulary, and the extortion had finally to be submitted to, before the party was allowed to pursue its journey unmolested towards the city of dreams—Rome.

And there, in his apartment in the Via Condotti, and as a natural sequence on the fatigue and excitement of the past few days, the Monk fell once more ill. A complete rest was inevitable, said his anxious nurse, and in obedience to her professional jurisdiction the daily diary had to show a few blanks. It was during this interim of enforced seclusion, that the gossips of Rome stirred their cauldron and added a pinch of scandal to the savoury of their stew. A mysterious stranger had arrived in the Pontifical city—a pale, attenuated invalid, habited as a Benedictine Father, and accompanied by a Brother, a Nun, and a Liliputian Monk—the latter a mere baby of three or four years old. At such an unusual announcement, Roman Society merely lifted its eyes and hands, and awaited development; but in Ecclesiastical circles its effect, to say the least, was hair-raising. The Holy Office literally bristled with excitement over the event. Without loss of time, one of its priests was despatched to grasp the nettle—that is to say, by means of a polite morning call, to approach the unconventional newcomer, and learn the purport of his presence in the capital, accompanied by so curiously assorted a suite.

This informal overture on the part of the authorities was to have been the prelude to a citation of investigation from the Court of Inquisition; but upon the Father's ready explanations as to his personal identity and canonical position in the Anglican Communion, the sky rapidly brightened, and the astonished delegate was at once transfigured from an official detective into an amiable and atten-

tive listener. Most educated people in Rome, he took care to tell the Monk, “knew all about Father Ignatius,”—a flattering assurance which a few days later was confirmed by Monsignor Talbot (or Howard), who conducted the Reverend Father into the Papal Presence, and by the way informed him that His Holiness was already in possession of his photograph.

The Inquisitorial business once satisfactorily concluded, it only remained for the disarmed emissary to cover his retreat with a few courteous flourishes and an apology for the intrusion of his visit. “No one,” said the good priest, “had been informed of the Reverend Father’s arrival in the city, and it being amongst the duties of the Holy Office to identify all strangers wearing the religious habit, hence the circumstance to which he was indebted for making the acquaintance of so celebrated a personality.”

And with a whole comet-tail of appropriate etceteras to the same effect, this polite gentleman, who was likewise an excellent English scholar, bowed himself gradually out, and set the whisper going, that the notorious Anglo-Benedictine was in orthodox Rome, together with three members of his Community. From that hour the Reverend Father became the cynosure, not only of the public gaze and commentary, but what was far more flattering, of a perfect avalanche of welcome and hospitality from a contingent which not unreasonably might have been expected to stand aloof. The Black Party, as the Ecclesiastical coterie is not unfrequently called in Italy, was indefatigable in its efforts to give the much-talked-about visitor a good time in Rome. It was from the Vatican itself that this courteous initiative hailed. As a preliminary step towards seeing the lions of the grand old city, Father Brownlow—a priest from the English College, and subsequently Bishop of Clifton—was appointed to act as interpreter and cicerone to his fellow-countryman, whose knowledge of the Italian language was still a little incomplete. Sister Ambrosia likewise had her share of kind attention. A very charming Roman Sister was dispensed from Enclosure and lodged

pro tem. in rooms opposite those occupied by the Reverend Father and his party. Thus Sister Ambrosia was relieved from the sense of loneliness and isolation which, but for the friendly ministrations of Sister Ignatia, must inevitably have been the portion of any woman similarly placed.

Brother Philip and the infant oblate not unfrequently accompanied the Superior and Father Brownlow on their sight-seeing expeditions, on which occasions the appearance of the small white-robed stranger never failed to create an enormous sensation in the Roman streets and buildings.

But it was on a personal visit to the Bishop of Rome himself that the Monk's heart was set. He did not dream that the Holy Father would honour him with a private audience, but he determined to solicit the privilege of participating in one or other of the heterogeneous receptions granted not unfrequently to bands of pilgrims from all quarters of the globe.

It was therefore with inexpressible delight and surprise that the unexpected intimation was received—His Holiness would be interested to converse with him, and for that purpose would receive him in private audience on an appointed day and hour. Father Brownlow was scarcely less excited than the Reverend Father himself. As interpreter to the latter, this interview meant a double admission to the Papal Presence. "I have to thank *you* for that, Father Ignatius," he said, laughing, as they were discussing the matter together. "If it had not been for you, I might have spent all my life in Rome without once being able to say I had seen His Holiness, except as one of the public."

When the eventful day arrived, the Reverend Father was so nervous that he could scarcely shave his tonsure, and he distinctly remembers that in consequence of his trembling fingers, the razor did considerable havoc to his head, which was gashed in a dozen places—an inauspicious prelude to so momentous an occasion. As the hours passed, however, this acute condition subsided, only to be revived when the

threshold of the Throne Room was finally reached, and then to be dismissed for ever by the gentle old Saint, who, in his dual character of Father as well as King, possessed the inspired faculty of merging the physical apprehension attached to his presence into the sweet spiritual atmosphere which seemed to breathe out confidence from every line and shadow of his kind, mobile face.

Journalism has already detailed in wearisome minutiae the etiquette observed at an audience with His Papal Majesty, and every Guide to Rome possesses a section set specially apart for a description, historical and architectural, of the immortal Vatican. I shall therefore avoid padding these pages either with a repetition of the one or a paraphrase of the other. It suffices the reader to know that the Reverend Father arrived at the Pontifical Palace too early by half an hour for his appointment, and that when in due time the summons to proceed to the Throne Room was transmitted, he progressed towards that stately apartment by means of the identical stair and corridors which to this day still lead through the carefully guarded anteroom into the sanctum of the greatest man in Christendom—the Rock Peter, whose hands hold the supreme sovereignty of the crossed keys.

To the onlooker, it must have been a breathless moment, almost a superb one, the meeting of these two great workers in the self-same Vineyard, the kingly vested Pope and the poverty-vowed Monk, each and both from a different pole of denomination, pressing forward towards the simultaneous meeting-place of all Christ-like forms and phases of Christianity—the glory of God and the welfare of human souls.

His Holiness Pius IX. looked on his visitor with a glance of unfeigned interest in which the spice of curiosity was not altogether absent, while the Monk regarded his host almost as an ecstatic might regard one of the dream-faces in his visions, and there was something strangely pathetic in the reverence with which the young Anglican prostrated himself before the venerable Patriarch of a

Church not his own—a something of which every one was aware who happened to be within hearing of the Pontiff's opening greeting. Placing both hands on the Reverend Father's head, he blessed him solemnly and fervently, and then bidding him rise and feel at ease, he commenced by welcoming him with great cordiality and expressing interest in the Monastic Revival of which the Monk was well known to be the zealous instigator and head.

It seemed, all the same, a little difficult for the good old Pope to grasp the congruity of a Benedictine habit on the back of a "Protestante," that being the comprehensive term under which Rome elects to define all English Christians outside the fringe of Papal jurisdiction. With infinite courtesy but relish did His Holiness pass his fingers over the monastic hood which furnished one of the picturesque details of his visitor's dress. Habit, girdle, scapular and sandals, one and all in turn had to furnish matter for a very catechism of questionings; but when it came to the hood—the old Saxon form of which is still worn at Llanthony—the Monk was fain to enter upon quite an elaborate dissertation relative to the authenticity of this ancient cut of Benedictine head-gear. These details appeared to interest the Holy Father keenly, and from the purely monastic vein he deftly turned the rest of the conversation into more personal and introspective channels. Here he assumed a specially sympathetic attitude. Not only did he glean from the Reverend Father a comprehensive approximate of his own aims and aspirations, but he evinced an intimate knowledge of international topics, asking for enlightenment on many things concerning England, the spiritual status of her Church, and the progress of several religious movements then causing a flutter in circles of Press and Policy. But the burden of the talk was almost exclusively personal, and contained many remarkable little touches of advice and exhortation which still live in the Monk's memory. One of these priceless word-atoms occurred towards the close of the interview, and was almost the valedictory commendation of this historical half-hour. "Remember above all things,"

said Pius IX.,—handling the Monk's hood emphatically as he underlined each syllable,—“remember that it is not the *cowl* which makes the Monk;” and the Reverend Father answering instantly but reverently, met his words as follows: “No, Holy Father; it is the *life*.”

These simple sentences have been so frequently misquoted by crooked minds and pens, that I make a point of reproducing them in their original integrity, just as they were spoken, and under the light of the intention in which they were pronounced.

The audience ended, the Reverend Father was once more committed to the care of Father Brownlow, under whose escort another half-hour was passed in visiting the treasures of the Vatican and the many unique masterpieces with which this palatial Museum abounds.

But the Monk had not taken his last look at the Pontiff! Happening to emerge, in his tour of inspection, from one of the first-floor apartments, both he and his companion espied His Holiness on the summit of the Grand Staircase in the act of receiving a deputation of pilgrims who had assembled to receive the Apostolic Blessing. In an instant the observant Pope was aware of the Reverend Father's presence, and leaving the pilgrims to await his return, he took a few steps forward and beckoned him to approach—a mark of favour which seemed to be anything but agreeable to Cardinal Antonelli, who at that moment happened to be in attendance.

Taking a medal from the pocket of his soutane, Pius IX. was about to present it to the Monk, when Antonelli interposed with a vehement gesture, and literally arrested the hand of his illustrious Superior, who was on the point of conferring the gift. A brief but evidently decisive colloquy closed this interlude. With a dignified movement, though a very gentle one, the Holy Father waved his Cardinal aside, and quietly handing the medal to its intended recipient, confirmed his gift with the following gracious words: “Wear this in memory of a visit to an old man.”

The Reverend Father accepted the souvenir—a medal of the Immaculate Conception—with unfeigned emotion, but he could not be unconscious of the fiery look which Antonelli threw him, as he murmured some fragment of appropriate thanks. Cardinal Antonelli, says Father Ignatius, “was a personality apart.” He was handsome and distinguished above the ordinary average, but his courtly exterior was marred by a substratum of negative bitterness which seemed to undermine his whole nature. His face in its “off” times was subtle and cruel. It was only when playing before the footlights of ambition or self-interest, that the brilliant courtier replaced the weary strategist, the satiated instigator of passionate intrigue.

Antonelli merits a fuller tribute than a casual mention, as the shadow of a moment cast upon another’s life. This man’s greatness has gained him a place in history, and his littleness a waxen immortality in the galleries of the inevitable Tussaud. Nevertheless, I must pass him by with just this observation, that in the Pope’s Palace, which should be the very core and quick of Roman Catholicism, Cardinal Antonelli was the one and only individual who resented the large-minded Christianity displayed by the Vicar of Christ, towards a fellow-Christian whose life’s devotion his own soul was too great and generous not to appreciate and admire.

Until comparatively recent years (when it was unfortunately lost in the Monastery garden) this memorable medal was attached to the Reverend Father’s rosary, which, together with its pendent crucifix, was likewise blessed by the same venerable hand. The crucifix has been lost more than once, and in each case almost miraculously recovered, even when all search had been abandoned, and every hope of its reappearance put aside.

In all the Abbot of Llanthony’s hoards of souvenirs, and they are many and precious, none are more highly prized by him than this rosary and crucifix. Were it not profane, I might even call them his mascots, for they never leave his person, but accompany their wearer by night and

day whithersoever he goes. At any rate, I may enumerate them without indiscretion as two well-worn reminders of a very pleasant and pious visit, paid in the never-to-be-forgotten long ago, to Rome and her last Temporal King, whose soul is now in peace.

CHAPTER XXX

“AS STRANGERS AND PILGRIMS”

“So preserved and guarded,
Dearest Lord, by Thee,
Soon the journey ended,
Safe at Home we'll be.”

BEFORE leaving Rome, the Reverend Father was able to visit several centres of interest from the monastic point of view. Amongst these were the Benedictine Monastery of San Paolo Fuori del Muro, and the Dominican Friary of Santa Sabina. At both these religious Houses the Anglican Monk was received with the greatest respect and cordiality. Another instance of this friendly large-mindedness was accorded him on a third occasion, when, hearing that there was likewise a Benedictine Institution within the walls of the capital, he drove there, and sending in his name, expressed a wish to visit the Enclosure. This request was answered by the appearance of the Superior in person, who pushed his politeness to the point of declining to allow his guest to kiss his ring of Office—“an unorthodox act between Abbots,” as he tactfully turned the compliment.

And from the Superior of Santa Sabina the Father's welcome was no less warm.

It was on the Ash Wednesday of 1866 that, accompanied by Brother Philip, he set out for this time-honoured Cloister. To his surprise, as a rigid observer of the uncompromising Rule of St. Benedict, he found on arriving, that the Vespers of the day had been chanted at 11.30 a.m., in order that the Friars might break their fast at noon, instead of late in the afternoon, as in the Norwich Community, and indeed in many enclosed Houses, such as

the Monasteries of the Carthusian and Reformed Cistercian Orders.

The Novice Master of Santa Sabina being an expert English scholar and an ideal host combined, it was to his special care that our Reverend Father was committed during his visit to the many objects of interest and veneration for which the Church and Convent of Santa Sabina are historically renowned. Amongst these relics is the enormous black stone—a weight too heavy to be raised by mortal hand—which a demon is said to have hurled at their saintly Patron, who was miraculously preserved from its fall. The Reverend Father has a very special reason for recalling the personal kindness of these sons of St. Dominic. While enjoying to the utmost his visit in their midst, he was suddenly seized with one of the fainting fits, to which from heart-weakness, he was still frequently subject. This untimely occurrence seems to have spread terror in the Community. The good Friars were convinced that their visitor was at the point of death, and the Novice Master causing him to be carried to his own cell and laid on the bed, lost no time in entertaining him with pious thoughts appropriate to a soul on the threshold of flight.

Brother Philip in the meantime fell to the share of the general Community, who with amiable but somewhat injudicious intentions, so completely turned his head by their expressions of regret that he was only a visitor and not a resident at Santa Sabina, that when sufficiently recovered to return to Rome, the Reverend Father summoned his attendant, he found that worthy person quite opposed to make a start at all. The situation was at once vexatious and absurd. Very mildly but firmly the Monk explained that his Brother must perforce go with him, and that he himself was too ill to dispense with his services. Unfortunately, however, this line of argument was only productive of complications. The Father was assailed on all sides by fervent entreaties that he also would participate in his Novice's inspiration, and transfer his allegiance from the black habit to the white. It required no small exercise

of tact to convince the zealous Friars without offence of the impossibility of such a suggestion ; but in the end the Monk was overwhelmed with invitations for the immediate future, and reluctantly suffered to take his leave, together with Brother Philip, whose heart evidently remained at Santa Sabina. So much dust did this trifling incident raise in clerical circles, that not content with merely recording it as a playful expansion of proselytism, some impertinent meddler actually telegraphed to England the astounding announcement that "the Anglican Novice who was accompanying Father Ignatius in his travels had been received as Postulant in the great Dominican Friary of Santa Sabina."

Brother Philip's conduct in the matter can scarcely have found favour even with those who most thirsted for his translation to a Roman Order. On the day following the famous visit to the Black Friars, the Reverend Father left for Naples, and no sooner had he arrived there than, ill and exhausted as he was, a new trial awaited him. Brother Philip quietly disappeared, leaving his Superior alone in a strange city with an elderly Sister and a little helpless child. The shock of this sudden desertion was so great that it brought on a serious relapse. Poor Sister Ambrosia was at the mercy of a worthy but timid doctor, who from the first glance at his patient took a pessimistic view of the case. Being himself an Englishman, he made her understand without difficulty that he considered the Monk to be dying, and that it was her duty to telegraph for his family without delay. The very anguish which so unexpected a climax must have caused the faithful Sister seems to have braced her to a pitch of courage which somewhat startled her discomfited fellow-countryman. "Nonsense!" she replied boldly, on grasping the sense of his diagnosis; "he is no more dying than you are. Only get him into the fresh air, and he will soon be all right again."

This demonstration of truly British candour was nevertheless destined to be prophetic. The Reverend Father did not die, and his recovery was further favoured by the

unlooked-for reappearance of Brother Philip, who, in a condition of abject penitence and dilapidation, returned very late the same night, and besought his Superior to forgive his desertion and reinstate him in his office. Brother Philip's story was both pitiful and foolish. He had run away with the intention of finding his way on foot to Santa Sabina, but by the way the conviction had reached him that the Lord desired him to remain a Benedictine, and on the strength of this revelation he had retraced his steps. In other words, the good Brother was very tired and hungry. He had no money, could not make himself understood, and the odds being against him, he thought better of his inspiration, and decided to play the prodigal in the penitential sense of the term.

The Monk was at this time too suffering himself, and too thankful to have the services of a personal attendant at any price, to treat his Novice with the severity he merited. Greatly to Sister Ambrosia's indignation, Brother Philip was received with fewer reproaches than kindly exhortations to be more loyal in future—a stretch of clemency for which the conscience-stricken penitent had scarcely dared to hope.

A cloud of sickness and disappointment hangs over the whole period—a very brief one—which marks the Monk's stay in Naples. So positively prohibitive was his condition of physical weakness, that he was unable to see any of the exquisite sights in this queen of southern cities. Every project that spelt exertion had to be abandoned, even to the refusal of two pressing invitations from the Superiors of Subiaco and Monte Casino—a deprivation which he felt keenly and for an obvious cause. Both Subiaco and Monte Casino are famous Benedictine Institutions, especially the latter, which is considered the Mother House of the Order. Monte Casino, although holding no jurisdiction over the foreign and independent congregations of the Order, is all the same dignified with priority, for the reason that it possesses the relics of St. Benedict, and is the House actually founded by the great Patron himself.

Knowing this to be the case, and the Monastery being situated midway between Rome and Naples, the Reverend Father determined to make a desperate effort to break his journey at Monte Casino, and proceed to Naples after his visit to the Benedictine Abbot should be accomplished. But in this resolve he was doomed to be disappointed, and to realise more than ever what relentless fetters his bodily weakness was forging round his best endeavours. At the railway station of Monte Casino he was seized with a fainting fit of so alarming a length, that on his recovery he had only strength enough to be lifted into the next available train and carried direct to Naples—and to his bed.

It may be imagined with what bitter regret the Father was forced to abandon this golden opportunity of realising one of the dreams of his life.

Time meanwhile was passing rapidly, and the rendezvous at Valetta already overdue. It was necessary, therefore, to push forward as rapidly as strength would permit, and in this intention the Reverend Father was anxious to cross the Straits without delay and take up the first steamer bound for Malta, the point at which it will be remembered that the Benedictine pilgrims were to join forces with Dr. Pusey and the Lady Abbess, and proceed together to the Holy Land.

The landing at Messina of the Reverend Father and his companions was an event not easily to be forgotten. The baby Ignatius had been very sea-sick, and was in consequence disturbed and fractious, while the Monk himself was in no condition to battle with the complications arising from the fact of arriving on a strange shore without being able to hold any kind of communication with its natives. Those who know Messina will realise the unique spectacle presented by these four poor derelicts, stranded helplessly on the crowded quay, among a very beehive of noisy Sicilian humanity. If in Italy their strained relations with the national tongue had proved a stumbling-block, in Sicily it was a fatality. Seated on their boxes—the only means

of protecting them from the clutches of enterprising officials—they wrestled vainly with the difficulties of the situation. In spite of Sister Ambrosia's repeated request that a "*voicher*" (*voiture*) might be procured to take them to an hotel, not a soul seemed intelligent enough to interpret the emergency, and there is no knowing to what straits they might have been reduced, had not the Reverend Father happily bethought him of the British Consul—an invaluable referee—whose assistance, after an expenditure of much intricate pantomime, he was finally enabled to invoke.

The intervention of this well-known official soon extricated the travellers from their dilemma, but it can scarcely be said that even under the shadow of a plenipotential wing, their experiences at Messina were altogether of a pleasant character. More than one small *contretemps* tended to make the date of their embarkation a landmark of relief rather than of regret. One of the first discordant notes was the loss of the Monk's rosary and crucifix—two precious possessions that were still warm from the touch of the Pontifical benison. The Reverend Father had taken a drive to the famous Monte Telegrafo, and on his return to the hotel had found his beads missing. The honesty of his *vetturino*, however, saved him from so irreparable a loss. Later in the evening this individual presented himself, rosary in hand, with the request that it might be given to the Padre, who had evidently dropped it in his carriage.

But the greatest "*cloche*" of all, to a weary convalescent barely recovered from the miseries of a long nervous illness, was the perpetual noise and bustle which in a busy southern seaport has always to be endured. In his hotel, which unfortunately overlooked the harbour, the sick Monk could find neither peace nor sleep. The babel of tongues below stretched him literally on the rack. To add to his torture, an unlucky dog, who was evidently left to sentinel some ship's cargo during the night watches, took it into its head to keep up a solo of incessant barking for hours together—an exasperating detail which alone made all attempts at

rest worse than useless. The state of uncontrollable anguish into which these surrounding influences threw her patient, alarmed Sister Ambrosia far more seriously than all the doleful prognostics of the entire medical faculty could possibly have done. She began to fear that his brain might become affected under the strain, and in her terror she rushed out of the hotel (midnight though it was and more) to try if by no desperate effort she could make some one understand that a human reason, if not a life, was being endangered by the never-ending challenge of that one miserable dog. Only the very suffering or the acutely sensitive, can appreciate the shudder with which to this hour the Reverend Father recalls the voice of his unconscious enemy, and its effect upon his own sorely-tried nerves.

It must have been little less than an actual deliverance to Sister Ambrosia, when that devoted woman saw her charge safely installed in his quiet cabin on board the Malta-bound steamer, and realised that each turn of the paddles was bearing him farther away from his canine tormentor, whose persistent yelp was the last sound wafted out from shore as the vessel left the harbour and made for the Straits.

The voyage from Sicily to Malta was accomplished without disaster, and so far as these pages are concerned, without incident. A severe storm in the Maltese Channel somewhat mitigated the good effects of the earlier and calmer periods of the voyage, which, while following the shadow of the classical Etna, and coasting Catania and Syracuse, had been enjoyed in a rare perfection of wind and weather that had wrought a distinct change for the better in the patient's condition.

The landing at Malta can scarcely be called auspicious. The heat was intense, and the Reverend Father so exhausted that he had to be carried on to the quay by two sailors, who by reason of the disturbed state of the sea, had the utmost difficulty in keeping their foothold on the ladder which served for gangway from ship to shore.

But a far more poignant trial awaited him on arriving at the hotel. The pilgrimage to Jerusalem was at an end. Dr. Pusey and the Lady Abbess had already left the island. With the advance of summer imminent—the prohibitive season for Palestine so far as strangers are concerned—and the very limited time which either of these busy personages could devote to their own pleasure, weighing heavily in the balance, the Reverend Father's friends had been able to await his tardy arrival no longer, and had regretfully gone their ways.

This not unforeseen but overwhelming climax reduced the Monk's cherished scheme to a house of cards. He at once saw the folly of attempting the long and difficult journey in his precarious condition, and with no more experienced companions than a Brother in whom he could not place a grain's weight of confidence, the long-suffering Sister Ambrosia, and a baby boy, who in himself constituted a charge and responsibility.

Added to these reflections, the Superior's heart was with his Community at Norwich, and he knew that his duty called him back to his derelict children, as soon as he should be able, without tempting Providence, to resume the strain and sacrifices of monastic life.

Father Ignatius has never yet been tardy in his initiatives, and ill as he was, it did not take him long to summarise the present difficult situation into a practical issue. God willing, he would stay and recruit at Malta for one month, after which interlude he would start homewards, with the purpose of reaching England while the summer sun was yet warm.

The town of Valetta being considered unpropitious for an invalid, the Reverend Father and his party moved to Sleima—a short way out—where, in the house of a kindly Englishwoman, they passed four peaceful and comparatively uneventful weeks. One or two incidents only occurred to interrupt the monotony of convalescence, amongst them the flying visit of the Monk's sailor brother, Augustus Lyne, whose ship happened to touch most opportunely at the

island, and an interesting interview with the Archbishop of Rhodes.

This dignitary (who is the Diocesan of Malta), on hearing that the famous Father Ignatius was driving to the same village where he himself was making his Episcopal Visitation, sent a polite message to the Monk, begging that he would give him the pleasure of a personal call. Upon this invitation, the Reverend Father left his carriage, and going to the house where the Archbishop was staying, spent a pleasant half-hour in his company.

The Father's health did not permit him to make a very extensive acquaintance with the sights of Malta, and it being the hot season, his reserve modicum of strength had to be carefully safeguarded. Nevertheless, in moderation, a good many drives were accomplished, most of the principal churches and religious houses visited, and altogether an approximate knowledge obtained of the interior of the island.

Two of the impressions which have outlived these experiences are worthy of record, for they supply a vivid dash of local colouring, almost a national throb of the Maltese pulse. The first cause of the Reverend Father's preoccupation was the absolute and almost unseemly poverty of dress displayed by the Friars of Malta. One Capuchin Father in particular attracted his attention by appearing in a pair of shepherd's-plaid trousers, worn unblushingly under a dilapidated habit that bore unmistakable symptoms of having been designed for a person half his size.

But if this apparent negligence in the equipment of the outer man somewhat shocked and scandalised the punctilious Benedictine, his spirit was on the other hand refreshed by the spontaneous enthusiasm displayed by the Maltese people in the insular churches. This was illustrated, amongst other instances, by a quaint occurrence which took place at Sleima during the celebration of Mass. At the Elevation, the congregation (a very large one) not only burst into a thunder of applause, but one woman who

was placed near the Reverend Father, actually tossed her baby high into the air and caught it again, after the manner of an indiarubber ball, in the ecstasy of her emotion.

A very simple but flattering little tribute was offered to the Monk one day in the ferry boat that plied from Sleima to Valetta. During the crossing, a Maltese gentleman entered into conversation with the Reverend Father, and amongst other casual queries respecting England and all things English, happened to ask him if he had ever heard of the Anglican "Père Ignace"? "Yes," was the Father's answer, "he had certainly heard of such a person." "Did he know him?" was the next question. "Slightly, yes," he admitted. "And was the good Père well when last he saw him?" "No, very unwell, he was sorry to say;" and at this juncture the Monk's gravity gave way in a degree that was somewhat significant. "I believe *you* are the Père Ignace," said the Maltese, looking him full in the face, and this fact being an undeniable one, a very friendly conversation ensued, in which the new acquaintance proved to be an interested onlooker and reader of many subjects closely connected with the Anglican Revival of which his fellow-passenger was the well-known pioneer and head.

Two days later the Reverend Father's friend sent his wife and children to Sleima for the express purpose of soliciting the Monk's blessing.

This simple episode was not without its sequel. Many years later, and in the height of a London Mission, a good-looking young man suddenly burst into the Father's waiting-room and excitedly demanded an interview. Totally disregarding the expostulations of those present, who assured him that his request could not possibly be granted, he pushed his way to the preacher's side, and falling on his knees, exclaimed, "I am the little Maltese boy whom you blessed at Sleima, and I want to tell you that I am going to be a Carmelite Friar."

There is yet one other echo of the Malta episode which must not be overlooked. While on the island in 1866, the

Reverend Father received a very friendly visit from the Anglican Bishop of Gibraltar (better known as Dr. Trower, Bishop of Glasgow), and to this prelate he was able to make his sacramental confession before Communion—a privilege which from force of circumstances he had not enjoyed for a period of many weeks.

CHAPTER XXXI

"A MAN OF SORROWS"

"Dark tempests crash and roar,
Breakers roll more and more.
On! to the peaceful Shore,
For Jesus rules the waves,"

SOMEWHAT after the manner of the prophet Jonah, the presence of Father Ignatius on board ship has always been the precursor of a meteorological disturbance. No matter whether the Mediterranean or Atlantic, the ocean forces have without exception been less than kind to the Monk of Llanthony, even to the point of causing him to endure many hours of keen physical suffering.

The home voyage from Malta to Marseilles was passed in a succession of squalls which most disastrously counteracted, so far as our invalid was concerned, all the benefit that it was hoped might result from the repose and salubrious influences of a sea journey. Not until the French coast was sighted did the weather begin to abate, and it was too late to compensate for the days of consecutive hurricane that had gone before. As more of a shadow than a man, the Father finally landed at Marseilles, on the morning of Palm Sunday 1866. The day was brilliant in the extreme, and as he set foot on shore, a flood of glorious sunshine was just lighting up the streams of townsfolk, who, palm branches in hand, were pouring from the churches on every side, and mingling their busy voices with the clash of bells that pealed hosannas from all the steeples within the city walls.

And a great note of peace was sounded in the Monk's heart, as he compared the calm serenity of this pious

picture with the angry turmoil of sea and wind which he had so lately quitted; but his meditations were not only of peace. A warm sense of personal thanksgiving was dominating his whole being—thanksgiving for a human soul that he had been permitted to save, by snatching back a despairing brother from the brink of suicide. So the song of his spirit was praise.

It was only the midnight before—but a few hours since—that this stupendous mercy had been vouchsafed to him, and it had been one of those nameless touches of inspirational impulse that already more than once had left upon his life-story the mysterious finger-prints of a nail-pierced Hand.

In the ship cabin occupied by the Reverend Father and Brother Philip slept one other passenger, a gentlemanly Britisher, who beyond being a very unobtrusive and courteous individual, did not call forth any particular notice from his companions. The Father himself was far too ill to take interest in his surroundings; and as to Brother Philip, he was altogether so unobservant and lymphatic a creation, that had a repetition of the Red Sea miracle been enacted under his cabin window, it is doubtful whether he would even have turned in his berth to get a better view of the proceedings.

On the night preceding the debarkation at Marseilles, the Monk's equanimity concerning his cabin companion received an unexpected shock. Those (and they are many) who have "enjoyed" the fitful lapses of sleep peculiar to prolonged nerve exhaustion will realise the Reverend Father's condition, mental and physical, when suddenly startled out of this characteristic somnolence by an appalling sense of danger, rendered all the more poignant because undefined, and experienced in the semi-darkness of a badly lighted ship's cabin. The only illumination present was a solitary oil-lamp, which, from the lurching of the vessel, swayed so violently from side to side as to be well-nigh useless. Divine Suggestion, however, is an energising force to which light and darkness are absolutely "both alike," and in an instant—in obedience

to a subconscious impulse—the Monk raised himself hastily in his berth and looked around for his fellow-sleepers.

Brother Philip was breathing heavily, with the unbroken rhythm that denotes a calm healthy slumber, but the other bed was empty, and as the Father's eyes grew more accustomed to the dim surroundings, he was alarmed to discover its occupant seated on a trunk, apparently engrossed in some mysterious object which he appeared to be manipulating vigorously. That this object was a razor, and that the unfortunate man was on the verge of suicide, were two convictions which flashed like lightning through the Reverend Father's brain, and with them the awful knowledge that he himself had been awakened by God's mercy for the express purpose of saving a soul alive. There was not an instant to be lost. The wretched creature was sharpening the weapon on his own palm, with the evident intention of cutting his throat, and at any cost the catastrophe must be averted. The Monk grasped the situation at a glance. Without waiting to arouse Brother Philip, he slipped noiselessly from his berth, and coming unawares upon the stranger, deliberately possessed himself of the hand in which the razor was held. "I am afraid you are ill and suffering," he said very gently, "and I have something here which will do you good." The man only shivered at the voice and touch. His face was horribly convulsed, and it needed no expert to tell the Reverend Father that he had to reckon with a poor maniac. If ever madness was written on a human countenance, the Monk read it in that breathless moment when the life of a fellow-soul, and perhaps his own too, hung on a balance which the snapping of a hair would have sufficed to overthrow.

"I have something here," reiterated the Father cheerfully, "which I know will do you good." And with that, he quietly slipped his crucifix into the sufferer's hand, and transferred the razor to his own pocket.

Luckily for this unfortunate madman's sake, the Rule Monastic obliges Monks to sleep in their habits. They are therefore able to rise from their beds at a moment's notice,

in happy independence of those toilet complications which so often hinder, and sometimes even agonise, a hasty midnight summons. Had Father Ignatius come to the rescue a few minutes later, there is little doubt but that his intervention would have been too late. As it was, he had the greatest difficulty in calming and dominating the poor afflicted mind. It was a crisis which no amount of reproaches or preaching could touch, but only excessive gentleness—that strong vertebrate gentleness which at once expresses power, confidence, and love. Through the long weary watches of the night did the Monk sit by his patient, soothing him like a child with soft comforting words and a reassuring clasp of the hand, and thus they sat side by side, this strangely assorted pair, until the dawn broke and the frenzy gradually gave place to reactive physical exhaustion. There was no more sleep for the Reverend Father that morning. When at last he had persuaded his new acquaintance to lie down, and had seen him sink into a profound slumber, his vigil was not ended. The horror of the last few hours was still upon him, and he had yet to offer his thanks to God for the unspeakable privilege that had been his.

So, as he watched the sunrise, and counted almost unconsciously the pale pink touches on sky and sea, his whole soul went up in a silent hymn of praise to the One by Whose Voice he had been called out of sleep to save a fellow-man.

It was not till much later in the day that the bustle on board ship, indispensable to a speedy arrival in port, awoke the would-be suicide. He appeared to be perfectly rational, though much exhausted, and retained a most minute recollection of the events of the night. His story was a simple one. He was returning on sick leave from India, where he had had very recently a severe attack of sunstroke. Ever since this illness he had been subject to fits of mania, but was now discharged from hospital as cured. Last night's occurrence had been a repetition of one of these fits, and had it not been for the Father's timely intervention he

would inevitably have cut his throat. "I owe my life to you, Reverend Father," he said emphatically, as he wrung the Monk's hand in both his own. "If you had been half a minute later, I should be a dead man now."

How it came that so irresponsible and dangerous a being should have been permitted to embark alone on a long voyage is a problem which Father Ignatius has had no opportunity of solving. In the hurry and crowd of debarkation he lost sight of his strange friend, whom he can only hope was met by some member of his family and placed under safe and suitable supervision.

From Marseilles to Ostend the Reverend Father's journey was continued overland, and by easy stages, through Switzerland and Belgium. Montreux was reached on Maundy Thursday, by way of Grenoble, Chambéry, Geneva, and Lausanne, and exactly one month later, the homeward route was resumed *via* Bâle, Strasburg, Luxembourg, and Brussels. This itinerary was accomplished without important adventure save at Chillon, where in a mountain drive an ominous eagle hovered dangerously near the carriage, attracted apparently by the white habit of the baby Ignatius, and once again near Glion, where the stumbling of the horses almost cost the lives of the whole party by precipitating them headlong over an unfathomable precipice. The right front wheel of the carriage actually hung over the abyss, when the Father, seeing the peril in which they were placed, seized the child in his arms and literally threw him out on the safe side of the road. This summary proceeding both terrified and offended the three-year-old boy, who, on the carriage being mercifully righted and the journey resumed, demanded of the Monk with many indignant tears, "What for my Fa' throw away his ba' like that?"

This mountain peril completed the picturesque record of the Reverend Father's journey. He was now destined to tread the uninterrupted platitude of the beaten track, and to face as best he might the bitter disappointments and disillusionments that were to greet his home-coming. At Ostend a halt of some days was necessitated by his exhausted condi-

tion, and it was here that the first tidings reached him of the withering blight that had fallen upon his Monastery, and indeed upon the entire fountain-head of monasticism in the Church for which he had sacrificed his all.

The Community at Norwich had been dispersed, the poor Brothers scattered, and the Elm Hill premises—his own private property—put up for public sale, with a debt upon it of £400, incurred in his name. It is not surprising that so heavy a blow brought on an access of complete prostration, and it was several days before he could be moved across Channel and to his father's house at Hambleton, whither he at length arrived, utterly broken-hearted.

But the worst had yet to come. For a time all letters were by the doctor's orders scrupulously withheld from him, and all reference to his troubles rigorously tabooed; but it was impossible that this state of things could go on indefinitely. One day, with infinite precaution, his own father introduced the subject of the Elm Hill *débauché*, by asking him if he ever remembered signing any document which could have affected his personal proprietorship of the premises. "I have signed nothing," was the Monk's reply, "but the receipt for the £500 loan which was then and there to be paid into the hands of the Ecclesiastical Commissioners."

Then the murder had to come out! No sooner had the Reverend Father's back been turned, than his sometime friend, the wily priest (who by the terms of a fraudulent document held the property as an absolute possession), set about asserting his rights. He served a notice on the Community to quit within the appointed period, and openly advertised the place for sale. Mr. Lyne senior, who could not understand this climax and was powerless to avert it, thought that the next best thing he could do would be to lend some initiative colour to his son's discomfiture, and in this kindly but mistaken intention he caused to be paragraphed in the leading papers, an announcement stating that, owing to ill-health, Father Ignatius had dispersed his Norwich Community and abandoned his monastic enterprise for

good and all. There is little doubt that Mr. Lyne at this juncture acted upon the idea, that overwhelmed by the seizure of his beloved Monastery, the Reverend Father would in sheer despair be ready to wash his hands of the whole concern, and gladly take refuge in some peaceful curacy which he (his father) would undertake to procure for him.

Never, however, was any delusion more complete or shortlived. The Monk's first step on realising the terrible complications in which he was involved, was to publish an emphatic denial of his retirement. Ill and sick at heart as he was, his energy did not desert him, and in an incredibly short time he had formulated, with Dr. Pusey's assistance, every detail of the tactics which he intended to pursue for the restitution of his violated rights. Dr. Pusey's cordial and active attitude in this urgent crisis, is only one of the many proofs of the unalterable friendship which existed between these two personalities. Not only did the great Churchman take upon himself the payment of the debt resting on the Monastery, but being a more astute man of business than our Reverend Father, he drafted most of the important correspondence which arose from the situation. Several of these letters, and amongst them a powerful appeal to the conscience of the primary delinquent—written in the small illegible handwriting that must always have been a joy (and at times a perplexity) to the Tractarian Inner Circle—I have had the privilege of reading, when preparing my notes for this portion of my work.

Dr. Pusey's systematic intervention possessed without doubt a double-barrelled significance. It was the outcome of a powerful attachment to Father Ignatius as his spiritual son and colleague, but it was none the less a distinct public protest against the demolition of Monastic Resurrection in the English Church—a Revival which indirectly he had done much to incubate, albeit through the medium of a younger and yet more indomitable "puller through" than himself.

On first grasping the fact of his financial ruin, which

the theft of his property hopelessly brought about, the Monk's impulse was to abstain from legal proceedings. He had received too severe a lesson on the Barabbas tendencies of the Red Tape Brotherhood not to dread new aggressions at their hands, but against this negative policy the combined cannons of family and friends were directed. The intervention of the Archbishop of Canterbury brought the scales down with a run. It was the Reverend Father's duty, urged this dignitary, to claim what in the sight of God was his very own, but at the same time his Grace expressed a wish that his young friend should take this opportunity of modifying his ways, and of accepting a curacy which after a year's probation should lead to his translation to Priest's Orders.

A very interesting series of letters now passed between the Archbishop and the Monk, and at the request of the former, the Reverend Father paid two friendly visits in the late summer of the same year to the Patriarch of the National Establishment. By his Grace's request, the Benedictine habit was on both these occasions laid aside. Father Ignatius made his appearance at Lambeth Palace in the priestly cassock sanctioned by the Anglican Canon Law, and at Addington (by special desire) in the ordinary "clericals" worn by the secular clergy. Both these concessions were cheerfully accorded in obedience to an intimation from the Archbishop, who entertained some vestige of prejudice against the monastic dress.

Our Reverend Father is the very first to speak with cordial gratitude of the kindly and considerate attention with which his Chief received him, and the purpose of his summons to headquarters, under such peculiar and almost painful circumstances, and it is a subject of deep regret that the amicable understanding then established between the two, should have been barren of result. Compromises, however, are rarely satisfactory, and their frontier lines so delicate and hazy, that misapprehension is well-nigh unavoidable.

In the case under the lens, it was an impossibility to steer clear of the shoals. Principle and conviction were

ingrained on either side, and Authority held the ropes. To command is easy, to submit difficult, especially when the "points" demanded, involve the surrender of things that are not Cæsar's, but God's only. All that a Christian man could concede and promise in order to prove his obedience to the "powers that be," the Reverend Father resigned himself to yield; but even in the very wholeheartedness with which this solemn assurance was given, the Archbishop saw the indomitable shadow of the life-vowed Monk beyond, and recognised the presence of a personality which he might outlaw and banish at his will, but never crush.

Dr. Longley held an undoubtedly critical hand of cards, and it was his aim to play a dignified game in which honesty and policy should be deftly combined. His personal position was duplex and delicate. On the one side he was confronted by a man in a million, who by dexterous manipulation might become a beacon in his Church instead of a firebrand, and on the other by an ambush of fellow-clerics who were viewing the situation in pious sarcasm, not only ready to pounce out personally at the first glimmer of opportunity, but thirsting to slip the collars of the war dogs of the Press on a situation without precedent in post-Reformation history.

There were too many cooks hovering about the cauldron, and by dint of a little misunderstanding and a good deal of wilful misrepresentation the broth was spoiled. Various and preposterous reports sneaked in edgeways into the newspapers, and although through private correspondence the Reverend Father categorically gave denial to these illogical and false statements, he was debarred (for some potent reason) from challenging his opponents in the public tilt-yard of the open Press.

At the outset of the adjudication Dr. Longley professed to see no reason why an Anglo-Benedictine Monk—with certain modifications in name and dress—should not occupy a curacy in his diocese, and at the same time live Community-life under the authority of the Vicar or Rector,

together with those of the Brothers who were of similarly disposed intention.

To these conditions Father Ignatius saw no alternative but to submit, and upon this understanding a post at Margate was offered him, which he was notified to occupy for one year prior to his assumption of Priest's Orders—after which event he would be free to seek a more lucrative position under Episcopal approbation. As a natural consequence, the Monk was bound to acquaint his Third Order Members with the restrictions within which his public attitude towards his many hundred spiritual children must henceforth be compromised, and for this purpose a general Tertiary Meeting was called, at which every Member seems to have managed to be present, in addition to a whole army of pressmen, who did not fail to fill their next day's column with weird and wonderful versions of the proceedings.

It must be confessed that considerable warmth was present in the auditorium, and when the Reverend Father in the course of his address laid stress on his own painful position, and the uncompromising curb by which in future the Ecclesiastical authorities intended to circumscribe his efforts as their Superior and Father in God, a very storm of indignant protest broke upon his words. The demonstration was deep-voiced and emphatic, and its significance not to be mistaken. An uneasy buzz ran through the newspapers. Highly coloured and sometimes even boldly inventive paragraphs appeared broadcast on the subject, in which all parties, from his Grace of Canterbury downwards, were satirically pilloried and stoned.

It was an eye-opener not to be disdained, and the good Archbishop scenting an explosive, deemed it best to put his Arch-Episcopal foot upon the smouldering fuse. That a young and fiery Deacon should command a whole army of miscellaneous souls as their Superior and Director, was a consummation of which the worthy Primate had never dreamed, and the innovation scintillated with consequences. As the Supreme Dispenser of Anglican—not to say Protestant—orthodoxy, expediency demanded that he should

consign the "monastic danger" to the other side of the fence.

In contradistinction to the ablutions ascribed to Pontius Pilate, the handwashings at the Archbishop's Palace were executed in printer's ink. Dr. Longley contributed a manifesto to the daily Press, in which he courteously disclaimed all sympathy with the Monk Ignatius or his methods, even hinting that the former had chipped the fine edge of his promised submission, by several statements reported from his address at a Meeting which in itself was an infringement of a mutually combined compact.

This challenge brought forth a very temperate repartee from the arraigned, who in a lengthy letter (of which the following is an extract) set forth in the same journal his individual claims to a fair hearing.

"From the commencement of our negotiations," wrote Father Ignatius, "the Archbishop assured me that he should be very unwilling to prevent men from living in Community, for the service of God, and gave me no idea that he would require me to disband my Order which I had founded. . . . The Archbishop's words to me were: 'At present my orders respecting yourself and your body are only of a negative character:

"I. That the Monk's dress should be abandoned.

"II. That the names of the Order of the Benedictines, and of the Superior of that Order, should be given up.'

"Of these two commands I acquainted my friends at our Third Order Meeting, and I stated most plainly that in all things I intended to obey the Archbishop. The greatest dismay was expressed when I declared my determination. . . . At the Meeting above named, I stated that our English Order of St. Benedict as an Order had never been, and never would be, given up, and that although in obedience to the Archbishop its name would be changed and its position altered, we should still exist as a body, only *under authority*. I began and ended by declaring, in spite of the unanimous discontent at the Archbishop's severe orders, that I intended in all things to submit to him."

Unfortunately, this public assumption of subordination failed to reassure the apprehensive Archbishop. In vain did the Monk reiterate by private letter that his words had been cruelly misrepresented at the fateful Meeting, and in vain did he solicit time and occasion for proving the veracity of his promised obedience. The odds were dead against him, for his Grace saw fit still to pose as the injured Pacificus, and before this potential attitude the editorial blue pencil was bound to crowd out the protest of the weaker side. The Reverend Father was denied the opportunity of justification—a rigorous measure of which he not unnaturally complains with some bitterness. In a private letter written to the Archbishop (a copy of which, with the rest of the correspondence, has been placed at my disposal), the Monk thus passionately repudiates the injustice of his position.

“I have been most careful,” he writes, “not to compromise you, whatever the papers may say. Mischief has been done by false reports, and your Grace did not see fit to give me the opportunity of denying them. Your Grace tells the world I have broken my word to you. *I have not!*”

There is little doubt but that much individual sympathy was the result of this unjustly imposed position, but the Monk's arbitrator being no less a dignitary than the Primate of the National Church, even the most zealous thought twice of nailing their colours to the mast. A show of party spirit would have been tantamount to the bearding of an Archbishop, so the Reverend Father's cause was allowed helplessly to lapse, and beyond the indignant protest of a few faithful friends he drifted undefended to the wall—that high bare wall which so many grand natures have had to face impotently, for want of the golden ladder by which alone it may be scaled.

One misfortune brought another. Not unnaturally (in the teeth of foregone events) the Incumbent of the Margate Parish took alarm at the Archbishop's attitude, and gently but decisively backed out of his proposed obligations. The

idea of a Benedictine Brotherhood let loose in his little kingdom, was a prospect which he trembled to contemplate. Sincerely sorry as he was to forego the ministrations of so famous a Missioner as his curate, the nightmare of a Monkish following scared him beyond measure, and he determined to flee from the impending complication while yet there was time. In a letter which was nervously playful, he informed the Reverend Father that he had "only bargained for the *horse*, but not the *cart*," meaning the Monk himself, and the Monastic Community which threatened to appear in his wake.

Thus the curacy had to be abandoned, and the prospect of the Priesthood once more postponed to an indefinite time.

And the Monk Ignatius, like Ishmael of old, was consigned to the wilderness. Without money, health, or supporters, he was literally turned adrift on the pitiless world; and again, like Ishmael, his mother's love went out with him upon his journey among the great dry sands.

CHAPTER XXXII

"AND THERE WAS LIGHT"

"Now from mine eyes hath fall'n a scale!
Jesus Himself I see!
Jesus! O Jesus! Hail! All hail!
I long to come to Thee."

EVEN those who personally repudiate the "monastic notion" from either of the standpoints from whence it is popularly bombarded, must have a touch of fellow-feeling for the Reverend Father at this period of his life.

Robbed, misrepresented, sick and penniless, his position was one which needed all the stamina of a true Christian's faith to snatch it back from the supreme temptation of despair. But there were two leading lights to lighten his darkness,—his God in Heaven, his mother on earth,—and with these unfailing lamps about his path, he turned his face towards Calvary, and commenced his Via Crucis anew.

The exquisite tact and cheerfulness with which Mrs. Lyne ministered to her son in his affliction, should alone immortalise her memory with a halo of soft warm light. The stress of circumstances was indeed desperate, but even in the darkest hours (and they were almost overwhelming) this brave and gentle spirit was able to point to the rainbow which lay hidden among the clouds of misery and ruin. Prudently and mother-like, she prevailed upon her child to possess his soul in patience. "God will give you your own Monastery and Monks yet," was the never-failing stimulus with which she would kindle a flicker of hope even in his most acute moments of despondency. And with his hand in hers, the Monk was by degrees able to emerge from

the deadly shadow which oppressed him, and breathe once more, if only in sighs, the free fresh air of action, self-defence, and the bleakest blast of all—submission to an authority that was indisputable, but nevertheless unjust.

It was impossible, even by the most optimistic of arguments, to veneer the rugged outline of the immediate future. No better comfort could be suggested than the metaphor of the black darkness which is said to precede a fair-weather dawn. Body and mind were worn and weary, the purse an empty husk, and all reversionary property which in years to come would alone have endowed a religious House with peace and plenty, about to be hopelessly mortgaged to meet the claims of a legal contest which in the eyes of God and man, must for honour's sake be fought. Desertion, too, played a cruel part in the tragedy. Only two Monks of the Norwich Community remained true to their leader. The others, scared and disheartened no doubt by the general earthquake, forsook him and fled. Thus, at the age of twenty-nine, and but barely recovering from a long and serious illness, our Reverend Father was forced to summarise his position in the world as that of a penniless wanderer, and even worse; for dependent on him were two Brothers, and the baby Ignatius, the last a little child whose age alone spelt expenses heavy and inevitable.

Without trespassing on family privacy, it will be readily understood, that despite the loving overshadowing of his mother's presence, it was impossible for the Monk to stay on indefinitely in his father's house. His spiritual influence over the minds of his brothers and sisters was a perpetual source of uneasy vigilance on the part of Mr. Lyne senior, to whom his son's views were totally incomprehensible, and for that reason subjects of lively sorrow and offence. The necessity likewise for providing food and shelter for those depending on him—*i.e.*, the Brothers Philip and Alban, and the oblate child—pressed heavily on his soul. Where to turn for help he knew not. To relieve the momentary financial pressure, Dr. Pusey had generously taken the two poor Brothers under his own roof, and Sister Ambrosia had

given shelter to the baby Ignatius; but timely and truly blessed as had been this friendly rescue, the Reverend Father shrank instinctively from prolonging so deep an obligation. And his yearning to be up and doing was rendered all the more maddening by the hopeless atmosphere of failure and circumscription which seemed to envelop and frustrate his every effort to part the clouds.

At length, after spending untold agonies of thought and prayer upon the situation, a sudden and decided change for the worse took place in his physical condition, and it became apparent to all who saw him that the Reverend Father was gradually sinking under a burden of grief and disillusion which was slowly sapping his very life. None realised more fully than Dr. Pusey himself the imminent danger of the Monk's daily increasing weakness, and he determined to make one more supreme effort to save his unhappy friend. Both Dr. Pusey and Miss Sellon were resting at that moment in the Isle of Wight, and it was to their headquarters—Southlands, Black Gang Chine—that, in conjunction with the Lady Abbess, Dr. Pusey invited the Reverend Father, in the hope that change of scene and surroundings might alleviate the terrible tension of brain and nerve which had supervened during the later developments of his unfortunate position.

Dr. Pusey's invitation was conveyed in terms which admitted of no refusal, and in due course of time the Reverend Father found himself comfortably installed with his devoted old friends, who, together with Mother Eldress Catherine and his own two Brothers, constituted the leading members of that memorable household. Those who were eye-witnesses of the interlude, can testify to the pitiful ebb-tide in body and mind which at this crisis almost carried the Monk to the Far Away, beyond reach of friend or foe. The harassing preliminaries of the Norwich lawsuit were already at their height. By every post came news of disaster, disappointment, and further financial liabilities; and daily also the iron of these enormities seemed to eat deeper into the Father's soul. It was impossible to keep the evil

tidings from him, and both Dr. Pusey and the kindly Abbess were heartbroken to note the effect they produced upon the patient's condition. All power of rest or action completely forsook him, and he relapsed into a curious phase of apathy, which caused him (being too weak to walk) to sit about aimlessly, first in one place, then another, in a manner which seriously alarmed those most interested in ministering to his sufferings. Sometimes Dr. Pusey would break in upon these paroxysms of terrible absorption. "I am afraid, my dear son, you are feeling very ill," he would say gently; and for a moment his words might raise a smile or a grateful rejoinder, but it was only a passing rift, and in the main the process of withering went on apace, in spite of every effort to stay the blight.

So far as it is permitted to mortal to tread in the footprints of the Immortal Progress, Father Ignatius followed his Master to Gethsemane at this moment of his life. Could he but have known that in a few short hours, the angels and Those higher than angels would come and minister to him, even among the Olives, how eagerly would he not have drained the bitter chalice, which then he prayed might still be lifted from his lips! What tears, what sweats of anguish his soul might not have been saved! But God deals with His chosen by mystery, and He saw fit to lead His servant through the fire, and even into the Valley of the Shadow, before finally setting him to stand in the Light of His Gladness.

We now hover upon the threshold of what Father Ignatius deems to be the greatest day in his career, the date of a remarkable spiritual crisis which he calls his "conversion." To my mind, the term *transfiguration* would be even more appropriate, since to the outsider the everyday application of "conversion" would scarcely express what its radical derivation most certainly implies. Be this as it may, the result is in the simple fact, that in consequence of a certain occurrence, the entire current of the Monk's life was abruptly changed, and his soul transfigured by a revelation, the transmission of which has brought

countless converts to the feet of a Personal and All-sufficient Saviour.

This is a biographical page of the most crucial import. To pen it dispassionately, impersonally, and with adequate justice appears to me to be a task of such supreme delicacy, that with the Reverend Father's consent I have decided to give the reader an approximate of his own words on the subject, reproducing as far as possible the exact formula in which he expresses his recollections of what neither Time, Sorrow, nor Persecution have ever been able to dim or rob of one iota of its strange but glorious significance.

"I want you to remember very clearly," says Father Ignatius, "what perhaps we should have accentuated still more in these preceding pages—that hitherto, up to my twenty-ninth year, I had found no personal *comfort* in my religion. From earliest childhood I had always been morbidly preoccupied with fears and doubts as to my soul's salvation, and as I grew older this anxiety only became stronger and more profound. To strive and struggle to deserve Final Mercy was the highest goal to which I could aspire, and, as I have already stated, it was in the hope of saving my soul that I had imposed upon myself the sacrifices and privations of a Monk's life. Therefore, although my religion was by God's grace the dominant note of my existence, that note was distinctly a sad and heavy one, not the glad pervading throb which must enthuse every believing Christian who has accepted Jesus as his own individual Gift—the Saviour and Agnus Dei in Whose Precious Blood the scarlet of his sins has once and for ever been washed whiter than snow.

"In every life, no matter how celebrated or insignificant, there is at least one supreme moment, which not even the last deep Sleep will make us forget. Such a moment was mine, when in the Sabbath twilight of the 10th Sunday after Trinity, more than thirty-seven years ago, the message of my soul's salvation was whispered to me by the Mother of Jesus Herself.

"Of the possible motive of this stupendous condescension

I shall not attempt to speak. God's Word tells us that His Revelations are not always vouchsafed to the wise and prudent, and that 'like as a Father' He dispenses His Almighty Pity. Let these two thoughts suffice. At the moment when the Heavenly Message reached me, I was plunged body and soul in the depths of a desolation which no words can describe. I was literally bereft of strength, hope, and all prospect of being able to gather up the ruins of a life which I had striven to live for God's glory. Nothing but failure and defeat stared me in the face, and to these were added intense physical suffering, and the humiliation of being a burden on the loving hospitality of my faithful friends, Dr. Pusey and Miss Sellon.

"If anything could have added to my depression, it was the utter loneliness in which from force of circumstances I unexpectedly found myself. On the Monday preceding the Sabbath which was to be my gladdest day on earth, I had been summoned to Norwich on urgent business connected with the robbery of my monastic property, and it was not until the following Saturday towards evening that I was able to return to the island. My visit to Norwich had been a most painful and exhausting one, for I had been compelled to address an important meeting convened by my own father, and although the sympathy of the entire city was with me, even my best friends could not hide from me the pessimistic outlook of my affairs. I was travelling quite alone, being unable to incur the expense of a Brother's railway fare, and the only consolation which I could promise myself, was the anticipation of the sympathetic welcome which I knew would await me at the hands of Dr. Pusey and the Lady Abbess.

"But even in this detail, a disappointment was in store for me. On arriving at Southlands, I found the house deserted. With the exception of the servants, every one had left. Cholera had broken out in London, and, with her usual devotion, the Abbess Priscilla had offered her services to the sufferers. Miss Sellon could accomplish in hours what most women would have had difficulty in

crowding into days or weeks. By a letter left to greet my arrival, I found that she had already organised and floated an impromptu lazaret in the heart of the infected neighbourhood. For this purpose she had hired an unused warehouse, stocked it with beds, set a staff of nurses to work, and with the aid of Mother Eldress Catherine, was herself supervising the patients as referee and directress of the whole scheme. Dr. Pusey had also gone to London on the same charitable errand, taking with him my two Novices, Brother Philip and Brother Alban.

"Thus my solitude was complete, and I must confess that it was almost more than I could bear. The next day being Sunday, I had leisure to meditate still more deeply on my sorrow; and the more earnestly I strove to offer the sacrifice of my life as an act of penitence and expiation, the more hopeless became my sense of ruin and abandonment. I went to Matins in Chale Church, but found no comfort even in the well-known periods of our beautiful liturgy. How well I remember the sermon! It was on Manaen, who was brought up with Herod the Tetrarch, and it only made me feel farther away than ever. In the afternoon I went to church again, but my condition was becoming so acute that it actually terrified me.

"What to do I knew not. I could scarcely bear the strain of my own existence, and to torture me still more, it seemed as if every morbid horror which had haunted my soul from childhood until the present hour, now awoke within me and combined like giants to stretch me on the rack. Had I but known in those awful moments that they were the last stepping-stones to Light, Joy, and *Peace in believing*, how swiftly they would have passed! But the scales were not yet lifted, and my burden was intolerable.

"One of the most restful spots in Southlands was the Oratory. This was a quiet room set apart for a Divine Guest—the Reserved Sacrament. The Tabernacle was posed above a beautiful French Altar, on which were candles, flowers, etc., and from whence (when in residence) Dr. Pusey said daily Mass. Without the small Sanctuary,

kneeling-chairs were placed for the convenience of the household.

"It was to this peaceful refuge, about six in the evening, that I betook myself and my troubles, and kneeling humbly in the Divine Presence, I prayed with my whole soul that one breath at least of the ineffable atmosphere of the silent Tabernacle might reach me—even me, the Lazarus at the outer gate which seemed so very far off. But my prayer died helplessly upon my lips, and my thoughts wandered uncontrollably into a thousand restless channels. On the chair immediately in front of the one I was occupying, lay a little red book, and as a distraction to my own melancholy reflections I mechanically took it up, and, opening it, ran my fingers through the pages haphazard. It was a homely Methodist Hymn Book—just one of those unerudite and crude little sheaves of verses which invoke a sneer or a tear on the part of the reader—and by the title page I saw that the Religious Tract Society had published it under the title of *The Cottage Hymn Book*, also that the Lady Abbess had brought it with her from the Orphans' Oratory at her Abbey, Plymouth.

"It was by the passage where my finger had inadvertently fallen, however, that my attention was powerfully and painfully arrested. Midway among the pages occurred these words, and my own forefinger pointed to them—

'Tis a point I long to know,
Oft it causes anxious thought:
Do I love the Lord or no?
Am I His?—or am I not?'

I needed no Daniel to interpret the burning message. It came upon me with an awful realism! And as though some cruel knife had been suddenly plunged into my heart, I rushed out of the Oratory and out of the house, crying aloud the bitter 'No' which these mighty questions wrung from me, with a flood of self-accusation that swept all before it.

"Southlands was built upon the steep of the cliff, just half-way up the Chine, and the grounds merged by a

private pathway into the stretch of sands below—those sands to which I fled blindly in that hour of consummate agony.

“The contrast of the quiet scene was exquisite! So deeply are its details impressed upon my memory, that I can recall them one by one, re-living them to-day, instead of invoking mere dream-pictures of nearly forty years ago.

“It was about seven o'clock by this time; not a sound was to be heard except the soft monotone of the waves drifting gradually farther and farther with the ebb-tide. It was a very gentle sea that evening, and I remember how brightly the sun went down over the Needles, and how the great wet sands were flecked here and there with touches of glory from the gold-red after-glow. Not a soul was stirring far or near, and with the Hymn Book still in my hand, I commenced slowly pacing to and fro, praying all the while that some waft of the peace which seemed to be upon sea and sky in this hour of Sabbath rest, might soothe my spirit also, into the hush and harmony of the coming night.

“And one by one, sweet thoughts stole in upon me, the knots of anguish were loosened, and the consolation of past mercies rose gently to rebuke me for the fever of the last dark hours. Above all, the remembrance of my Norwich children absorbed me with an infinite reproach, as I dwelt upon their love and faithfulness, their staunch adherence to my standard through good report and evil. And with this grain of comfort, mitigated though it was by a sense of separation and acute regretfulness, came the reawakening of the Monk within me to the contemplation of my monastic obligations. I was once again at Elm Hill, the leader of souls, the careworn Superior, on whose shoulders rested the evolution of the daily Rule. It was the Compline Hour, and, had God been willing, I and my Brothers should have been in Choir, reciting our sacred Office on the eve of going to rest. The retrospect was too realistic to be resisted, and its thrall was upon me. Alone as I was, and with no responses but the lapping of the waves upon the shore, I

commenced this beautiful and commendatory Office, walking slowly as I did so, now facing the brilliant sundown, now stepping in the silent shadow cast by my own figure upon the waste of sands.

"I can recall, almost as an individual landmark, each one of these mysterious and transitory moments, wherein, though I knew it not, my soul must itself have been a living embodiment of the twilight atmosphere—half swathed in darkness, half breaking from the shadows, in the strength of the armour of Light. I could almost feel the counter-shock of some mighty spiritual revulsion at work within me; but as yet the Veil was unlifted, though I knew that it swayed visibly, as though stirred by some far-off Breath.

"But I recited my Office nevertheless calmly, and with the measured cadence which our holy Rule prescribes. It was not till I had reached the climax of the *Salve Regina* that the revelation came—the Light from Heaven that once and for ever was to solve the problem of this dark world.

"I had commenced the familiar phrase which precedes the final salutation—('Et Jesum, benedictum fructum, ventris tui, nobis post hoc exilium *ostende*')—when at the final word '*ostende*' a strange and wonderful thing took place!

"There may be one, or perhaps more, amongst those destined to read this volume, who will understand from personal experience the meaning of the term 'transported in spirit.' The rest will accept or reject what I am now about to describe at their own discretion.

"I am not offering this occurrence to the public under the category of ocular vision, ecstatic trance, or any one of those psychic phenomena which human science strives vainly to classify or explain. I am merely turning down a page of my life story—a page without heading or footnote, and which God alone can number in His great Index of Intentional Mystery. But this is only parenthesis.

"As the familiar and often repeated syllables left my lips, I was what I elect to call '*transported in spirit*' to the Land which we are all taught to designate geographic-

ally as 'Holy,' though few perhaps understand or take the trouble to ask why. In my body, I still stood upon the sands in the little English bay, but in my soul I walked in God's City—Jerusalem—not the Jerusalem of wreck and ruin, the piteous derelict that has fallen from the hand of invader and barbarian, but the glorious City of centuries gone by, when the Messianic promises of the Old Covenant were being merged into the fulfilment of the New, and the Courts of the Temple were prophetically trodden by the Jewish Maiden-Mother, on whose pure bosom slept the Son of God, made Man.

"In an instant the sunset was blotted out, the shadow of the rocks blurred, and both sky and ocean seemed to combine in a soft limitless space of mist, which enveloped my whole being, and drew me irresistibly I knew not and cared not whither. My only physical sensation was one of complete obliteration—a sudden cessation of all outer sight and sound. And when this lifted, I felt that I had somehow been transported by an Unseen Hand, and set down in the midst of strange and far-away surroundings. Yet all the same they were inexpressibly familiar to me. I was in the City of my dreams! Not only in Jerusalem itself, but actually watching at the Gate of the Temple called Beautiful, and gazing through it in spirit into the three great Courts beyond—the Court of the Gentiles, that of Israel, and the third and last reserved for Priests alone. And as I looked and wondered, a group of figures crossed the scene. From the Court of the Priests, and tottering feebly by reason of his advanced age, came a venerable old man. He was evidently in a state of extreme agitation, and his eyes were fixed eagerly on a man and woman who were advancing to meet him from the second Court. Every line of his face expressed emotion, so much so that I turned instinctively towards the objects which seemed to move him so powerfully. The new-comers were an elderly man of unpretending appearance who carried two white doves, and a fair young girl bearing a little babe in her arms. Softly and silently I followed in their wake, and in another instant

I stood almost at the woman's side—and had looked upon Her Child.

“His Face was the Face of Jesus! I knew that I was in the Supreme Presence of the Babe of Bethlehem, who, with Mary and Joseph, was to appear unto Simeon, the faithful watcher for the Consolation of Israel, who should not see death until the coming of the Lord's Christ.

“I had scarcely conceived this overpowering conviction before its fulfilment was accomplished. With a gesture impossible to describe, for it embodied at once so much human tenderness and such superhuman adoration, the Ever-Virgin placed Her Babe in Simeon's arms, and I saw the old man's withered fingers close tremulously and ecstatically over his Precious Burden.

“He had received Jesus! The sight was more than I could bear. In an agony of bitter soul-hunger, I sprang forward, stretching wide my empty arms. Oh that I might receive Him too! ‘Give Him to *me*, even to me also!’ I cried aloud; and at my cry the Mother of Mercy had compassion upon me, for she turned and smiled as she said, ‘Jesus is for *you*, as much as for Simeon,’—and with that she received the Holy Child once more from the aged Israelite, and, coming to me, gently laid Him deliberately on my own breast. I dare not dwell upon the rapture of that Divine contact. It seemed that as the Priceless Treasure rested on my heart, a Voice—whether His Own or some listening angel's I know not—whispered the comfort to my wounded spirit which it had thirsted for so long, so passionately, and hitherto in vain, ‘*None shall pluck thee out of My Hand.*’

“In that breathless moment of heavenly, yet in a sense also, of *incarnate* communion, the conversion of my soul to Jesus was accomplished. Like Simeon, I too could now ‘depart in peace,’ for mine eyes had indeed ‘seen His Salvation.’

“But it was only a glimpse—a flash! The next instant the Vision had faded, and I was pacing as before on the dull grey sands. The glory of the sunset had sunk behind

the rocks, and my hands were empty, save for the shabby red Hymn Book, which I still almost unconsciously held. Nevertheless, I was a new man, the happy possessor of a Personal Saviour, the redeemed by an all-atoning and finished Redemption; and it was with an overpowering flood of joy and thanksgiving that I concluded the interrupted salutation of that miraculous hymn of praise. To Her, from whose Virgin Arms I had received the unspeakable Gift of Salvation, how gratefully, how confidently, could I now offer my soul's tribute—'O clemens, O pia, O dulcis Virgo Maria!'"

CHAPTER XXXIII

"A NEW CREATURE"

"I hear the Voice of Jesus speaking,
My Life, My Grace are thine!
Now, happy soul, be up and doing,
And in My Beauty shine."

WHEN the Monk of Llanthony gathered up the floating threads of life as a "converted" and transfigured man, his condition, physical and metaphysical, may be best expressed in the words of St. Paul—himself the Prince of Converts—who writes as follows:—

"If any man be in Christ, he is a new creature. Old things are passed away! Behold, all things are become new." And again—"All things are of God, Who hath reconciled us to Himself by Jesus Christ, and given to us the ministry of reconciliation."

It was both as the newly "reconciled" and the future minister of "reconciliation" that Father Ignatius drifted back from the Borderland of Mystery into the weary platitudes of this mundane sphere. Body and soul he was a new man, the happy receiver of a Gift unspeakable, which from henceforth he longed and hungered to transmit to the people that sat in darkness—those who had not yet heard the feet upon the mountains of the bringers of Good Tidings, the King's messengers of the Gospel of Peace.

"God so loved the world that He *gave* His Only Begotten Son." Even the most extended span of life would be short for the delivery of so exquisite a Message, so grand in its simplicity and the limitless comprehensiveness of its reach. But it was not towards the inertia of

ecstatic contemplation that the Monk suffered his soul to wander. He had no sooner accepted his salvation than a great white light of inspiration seemed to infuse his entire being, and a strength certainly not his own, came to brace together the drooping energies of his tired body and mind.

In the absence of Dr. Pusey and Miss Sellon, there was no one near to whom he dared confide his Precious Secret, and partly owing to this isolation, but still more by reason of an instinctive reticence, our Reverend Father carried his happiness to the sanctuary of Silence, and it was only by a nameless change pervading his whole appearance and conversation, that the outside world became aware of a metamorphosis which was nothing less than the awakening out of darkness into light.

The Sunday following the date of his conversion was also destined to be an important milestone in the Monk's biography. During the intermediary week he had received and accepted an invitation from the Rev. Clarence Soanes, of Woodfield House, Streatham, to spend a few days with him, for the purpose of putting himself within easy touch of Addington, it being well known that he was at this particular moment in constant communication with Archbishop Longley, and that the Prelate had notified his intention of arranging a personal interview. Mr. Soanes himself was engaged to preach on the 11th Sunday after Trinity at St. Bartholomew's, Moor Lane, City, but Father Ignatius having arrived a day or so previously at Woodfield House, the inspiration seized him that he should ask the Vicar to allow his friend the Monk to be his substitute. The Reverend Father, who it must be remembered, was eagerly awaiting an opportunity for delivering his Glad Message, made no difficulty in accepting Mr. Soanes's proposition, and accordingly accompanied him willingly to London, in spite of the fact that he was wearing full monastic dress, and the reflection that this detail would probably scare any ordinary Protestant Vicar out of all likelihood of acceding to so sudden and unexpected a request.

But the Monk's fame as a brilliant orator had gone before him, and it proved to be an efficient passport for admission to the pulpit of St. Bartholomew's, Moor Lane. On arriving at the church, Mr. Soanes sought the Vicar in the vestry, while Father Ignatius waited in one of the pews until such time as Mr. Denton's pleasure concerning him should be known. A moment later the Vicar himself appeared, and after courteously assuring the Reverend Father that he would esteem it a privilege to place his pulpit at the disposal of so gifted a preacher, he invited him into the vestry, where the clergy and choir were already vesting for the eleven o'clock Matins and Celebration which were about to begin.

St. Bartholomew's was at that time in the hands of a learned and much esteemed Incumbent—the Rev. William Denton—whose name is still well known both as a scholarly theologian and the author of more than one noted work of ecclesiastical reference. It was therefore with real pleasure, as well as a very pardonable touch of curiosity, that he welcomed the new-comer, and awaited the result of his eloquence upon a scant and sleepy congregation, whose negative qualities were only too well known.

On that particular morning there were not more than forty people in the whole church,—most of these were aged folk who came for the parochial dole of bread,—and as the Monk ascended into the pulpit and faced the scattered few, he felt that it would only be by miracle should he kindle the Divine Spark among these poor dry fossils. Nevertheless, the sermon was in every way a memorable one. To its preacher it unfolded the vista of an illimitable future, and to its hearers it was a revelation which drew at least one darkened spirit within the Fold of Light. The text was startlingly simple, but its application went home to every heart. It was from the Epistle for the day.

"Christ died for our Sins."

That was all; but the words seemed somehow to ring up

to the roof of the time-worn building with a new significance which was both weird and wonderful.

"Perhaps," said the Reverend Father, "there are few in this little company who understand the value of these five short syllables. Until last Sunday evening, I myself had never done so, but now God has opened my eyes. I am to-day the possessor of the Gift of God—that Gift which is within the reach of all who will accept Jesus, from the Rich Man to the 'king of shreds and patches,' from the white-haired Patriarch, to the tiny child who can scarcely lisp the Holy Name."

And with this unconventional overture the fire of his tongue broke loose, and he preached Jesus to that musty, groove-honouring assembly, with a power and persuasion of which they had never yet dreamed. The impression was prodigious. Mr. Denton, Mr. Soanes, and a few of the most enlightened present, were alone capable of appreciating the singular beauty of the speaker's oratory, but one and all, even the poorest and dullest, felt that a strange thing had come to pass in their midst. They had received a message from a long-forgotten Friend.

To many, that sermon was a Pentecost of revelation, and to the Monk himself its memory is still one of the many relics which he treasures figuratively between his Bible leaves.

After service, just as the clergy had begun to disrobe, a knock came at the vestry door. Mr. Denton opened it in person, and ushered in a middle-aged woman of very respectable appearance. "Please can I speak a word with the preacher?" she asked timidly; and upon the Vicar making known her request, the Father came forward and asked her what he could do for her. "Oh, sir," she said excitedly, "I feel I can't go away without telling you how happy you have made me. I am the housekeeper of a gentleman living quite near Streatham, but though I have been nearly thirty years in a clergyman's family I have never heard the real Gospel till now. Before to-day I had no idea that Christ died for *my* sins, but you have

made me know and *feel* it, and I shall go home such a different woman." Tears of joy stood in the poor soul's eyes, and even the most sceptical could not question the sincerity of her emotion. It was a climax which neither Mr. Denton nor Mr. Soanes could possibly have foreseen, and they stood thunderstruck before a manifestation of the Spirit which they dared not attempt to fathom or share.

"There we were," says Father Ignatius, when recalling this episode, "this woman and I, as many would say, like two fools, just hovering between tears and laughter, so intense was the happiness which we were feeling together. I often wonder how that good housekeeper happened to have come all the way from Streatham on that particular morning. Perhaps she had heard that a Monk was staying at Woodfield House, and would probably preach instead of Mr. Soanes, so out of curiosity she had come to hear what such an individual could possibly have to say for himself. At any rate, she went away richer than she came, for she had received Jesus, the richest and fullest of all Divine Gifts."

It may interest some to know that this worthy woman became one of the Monk's most faithful followers. Later on, she joined his Third Order, and as "Sister Faith" proved herself till the day of her death, which occurred comparatively recently, both a loyal and devoted member of the same.

The career of the future "fisher of men" was now about to develop and bear fruit an hundredfold. The Rector's housekeeper was not by any means the one and only convert sent to crown the first week of the Father's translation to the Greater Light. By an unlooked-for whim of circumstance, he was brought face to face with Dives, in the shape of a rich and aged friend who was about to die without the knowledge that for the believing Christian there is no Death at all. The Monk's task was a stupendous one. The sufferer had been suddenly struck down. He was without hope of salvation, and, to use his own

words, "his innings were out, he could not expect Christ to accept the fag end of so sinful a life as his had been," and much more to the same effect.

But the inspiration of the Beautiful Gate was fresh within the Father's soul, and with Blessed Mary's own assurance, he was able to lead this wanderer to the Feet of Her Son Crucified. "Jesus is for all who will accept Him. He does not ask you to *give*, but to *receive*. Who-soever *will*, let him come—and him that cometh, He will 'in no wise cast out.'" The old man covered his face with his hands, and the tears fell thickly through his trembling fingers. But the Monk knew those tears, and thanked God for them. He stole away silently, leaving the old man in sweet communion with his newly-found Saviour. He had accepted Jesus, and his end was Peace.

In the practically biographical sense, that Sunday morning sermon must be taken as the first step in the Reverend Father's march to metropolitan notoriety during the second era of his public life. Before his conversion, he had already preached a stirring London Mission to crowded congregations, but his words had produced quite a different effect from those which he was henceforward to utter as the Minister of Reconciliation. He was what he professed to be—a changed man—therefore his own personal revulsion must naturally mould and colour all his future dealings with his fellow-creatures. Whereas his cry had been, "Save your souls," it was now to be lost in a thrilling roll-call to lay down arms in the Peace of an already perfected and gratuitous Salvation.

No one who had heard the Monk a few weeks back, and again on his return in spirit from the Court of Israel, could entertain a single doubt as to the depth and breadth of this extraordinary transformation. Even in the very appearance of the preacher a mighty change was to be noted. In spite of his many misfortunes (and the clouds were at that moment in full burst upon him), a serenity and strength seemed to have replaced the atmosphere of harass and unrest which had hitherto cast a shadow even

upon the holiest moments of his life. The change was so obvious that it attracted universal attention, and the Reverend Father, albeit reserving for his own soul the exquisite details of his conversion, made no secret of the fact, or of his determination to share with others the magnificent privilege which he himself had received. Not till many years later was confided even to his spiritual father, the astounding process of that momentous twilight Vision, and Dr. Pusey, meanwhile expressing surprise and even alarm at his pupil's increased devotion to the Blessed Virgin, was at a loss to imagine its cause.

Up to the time of his "conversion," Father Ignatius, like his illustrious teacher, had never addressed an "Ora pro nobis" to the Mother of God. The more impersonal "Oret" had hitherto been his nearest approach to a direct invocation, but now the former things had passed away, and advancing a step beyond his guide, he openly adopted the Devotion to Mary as the lesser Light of his life.

The interest which the Plymouth Brethren evinced on hearing that their Monk-friend had "received Salvation," was heartfelt but suggestive. "Of course, dear Brother," they wrote from many parts of the kingdom, "you will now renounce your Popery and Monkish notions for good and all;" and great was their amazement when to each of these kind inquiries the "dear Brother" vouchsafed the same answer, "that he meant to be more of a Monk than ever, in order to thank God by his life-service for an Un-speakable Gift."

To Mr. Denton, the Father's sermon preached in St. Bartholomew's that 11th Sunday after Trinity 1866, was a twofold revelation of edification and suggestion. It appealed to him forcibly as a theologian and a Christian, and hardly less so as the Incumbent of a large and empty City church. His galleries had been closed for years, and the advantages to be reaped from their re-opening through the powerful attraction of so original a preacher, touched him very closely with the breath of enterprise. "Nothing venture, nothing have;" and no sooner had the remarkable

stranger left the pulpit, than this reverend gentleman was already putting forward the preliminary feelers that were later on to stake the foundations of a systematic and salaried engagement. Mr. Denton introduced his new friend to his wife and family, and in the end the Monk accepted the post of Sunday evening Lecturer at St. Bartholomew's, Moor Lane, to which appointment was annexed the obligation of holding a Bible Class every Friday night in the same parish.

For these auxiliary services, the Reverend Father was to receive a sum of £120 per annum—a fact which it is interesting to note, inasmuch as, with the addition of £20 earned a few years before as Missioner in Father Lowder's East End district, this modest stipend represents the sole monetary recompense which Father Ignatius has reaped, from over forty years' devotion to an ungrateful and infidel-wrecked Church.

Dr. Tait—at that time Bishop of London—was pleased to approve Mr. Denton's project for promoting a spiritual awakening in his apathetic congregation—the more so that the Vicar of St. Bartholomew's was known to be a model of orthodoxy, and incapable of placing in his pulpit any one unworthy of the Episcopal smile. Not only did the Bishop express personal interest in the appointment, but he graciously intimated his willingness to confer Priest's Orders upon the Monk, provided that the latter should hold the post of Lecturer for one consecutive year to the satisfaction of the Incumbent and the edification of souls.

So thereupon the compact was sealed. Those who had hitherto come for the dole of perishable bread were to receive in addition the Living Bread of Heaven, and the dispenser of this Good Gift was to gain his first firm foothold in the heart of the great London world. The homely housekeeper's words had been the earliest peal on the sweet chime of bells that God's Hand had set swinging and ringing in his own silent soul, and it was with a thankful spirit, though with nothing more substantial in the way of personal possession than his well-worn staff and scrip, that the

Monk once more took up his parable as the Minister of Reconciliation, the preacher of a Gospel whose burden is "Jesus Only, Pax."

I should like to underline the parenthesis that at this period of his life, and under the blaze of the public eye, Father Ignatius pursued his monasticism unmolested, and set about finding a temporary Monastery, where he might live Community-life with those Novices who had remained faithful to him, and the oblate child, who since his return from abroad had been staying at Scarborough in charge of Sister Ambrosia. Towards the close of September 1866, all things concerning the Lectureship at St. Bartholomew's being propitiously arranged, the Reverend Father selected a very modest little abode in Milton Road, Stoke Newington, as a home for his Brothers and himself, during the five days of the week on which he was free from his duties at St. Bartholomew's. From Friday to Monday morning the Monk lodged in Mr. Denton's house in Finsbury Circus, but the intervening days were his own, and these he passed within the hermit shell of the impromptu Cloister of Milton Road.

It may be imagined with what widely staring eyes the enlightened neighbourhood of Stoke Newington regarded the sudden incursion of a handful of tonsured and fully-fledged Monks. They were nevertheless suffered to pursue their ways in comparative peace; for even if on occasions, the doorstep and area railings of their house were surrounded by a crowd of curious spectators, the aggressions were of an inoffensive nature, and were productive of evident satisfaction to their perpetrators.

Altogether therefore, these six months passed by the little Community constituted a peaceful and somewhat stagnant interlude. All the glow and fire in the Monk's life were concentrated at this time in the busy week-ends which he was passing in the City, as the cynosure of tens of thousands of criticising and carping eyes. Milton Road, as a local landmark, possesses little or no biographical interest, save for one record, which is in itself a striking

parenthesis in English Church History. This was the visit of the celebrated Dr. Littledale, who came to Stoke Newington expressly to give the baby Ignatius his first Communion—the child being at that time about three years old. In the Greek Orthodox Church, it will be remembered that Holy Eucharist is administered to each irresponsible babe who simultaneously receives the Sacrament of Baptism; but in the English Church so daring an innovation (or perhaps I should say revival) had never been chronicled since pre-Reformation days, and it merits mention as an historical cameo which is interesting and unique, to say the least.

The ten months and a half lived by Father Ignatius under the direction of Mr. Denton, may be described as the prologue to the storm of popularity and persecution which was fast gathering in the near horizon. His success as a preacher far surpassed the Vicar's most sanguine forecast, and large sums of money, varied with jewellery, literally loaded every offertory plate which was presented at the close of these unconventional but evidently magnetic appeals. Every week that passed, proved to Mr. Denton how thoroughly he had combined serpentine wisdom with dove-like intention, by submitting his flock to the shears of a new-comer who was undoubtedly not only a passing fashion, but an energising power that had come to stay. In a very short time, both the Sunday Lectures and Friday evening Bible Classes were crowded to suffocation. The body of the church became inadequate for the seating of the many hundreds, and for the first time since the presiding Vicar, and his predecessor before him, had set foot in St. Bartholomew's, the extensive galleries were thrown open, and filled by an enthusiastic public. One thing led as usual to many more. The clergy of the neighbouring churches pricked up their ears, and became interested on-lookers from more than one point of view. The Monk was assailed with pulpits, literally bombarded with invitations to preach or lecture; but at the moment his physical strength was unequal to farther-a-field exertions, and he

concentrated all his efforts upon his week-end labours and the care of his Community, which had by this time begun to show signs of further development.

Although Father Ignatius was not bound by the terms of his engagement to occupy himself with parochial visitations, circumstances not unfrequently led him to dabble in this species of clerical duty. He did not forget his poorer brethren while ministering to the rich, and it did not take long for his name to become a byword among the sick or sorrowing of the smoke-dried City parish, just as it had been a few years back in the dreary alleys of starvation, hidden away under the restless shadow of the crowded London Docks. I have only space to tell one of the several stories connected with the Monk's ministry at St. Bartholomew's, but that one must needs be told, inasmuch as it serves to emphasise once again the strange and inexplicable gift of healing, with which from time to time God has seen fit to invest this unaccountable personality.

One Saturday night, when the Reverend Father was returning, after a day of excessive labour, to Mr. Denton's house, he was so overcome by fatigue and faintness, that he was obliged to sit down on one of the seats which were then to be found in the garden-enclosure of Finsbury Circus, before attempting to go farther. He had not rested there a moment, before he was accosted by one of the Vicar's district visitors—a lady who later on was known as Mother Dorothea, and became one of his first cloistered Nuns. “A poor woman, by name Mrs. Mar, was dying! Would the Reverend Father be kind enough to go to her at once?” This was the purport of Mother Dorothea's greeting, and, ill and exhausted as he then felt, it somehow irritated the weary Father to the verge of nervous exasperation. It was not his duty to visit the sick of the parish, and he took no possible interest in this Mrs. Mar, whom he had never even set eyes upon, so why should the work of the other clergy be thrust upon himself?

Father Ignatius is the first to suggest that he must have given that poor good district visitor no end of scandal

by his open disinclination to obey the call of charity, but his impulse was an uncontrollable one—in other words, he was in an exceedingly bad temper. “I don’t believe the woman is as much dying as I am,” he said irritably. “A pain in the big toe is sufficient to make these poor people imagine they are going to die. I really cannot come.”

But Mother Dorothea was not to be suppressed. “Mr. Lyne,” she said gently, “it was the doctor who sent me to fetch a clergyman. He is with Mrs. Mar now, and he says she cannot possibly live till morning.” This new assertion left the Monk no alternative. “I suppose, in that case, I *must* go,” he answered reluctantly; and suiting the action to the word, he rose from his seat and prepared to follow his companion upon her errand of mercy.

But he was terribly out of tune with the occasion. All his physical strength seemed to be in hopeless dilution, and in his heart he wished that both Mrs. Mar and her troubles were a thousand leagues away.

A short walk brought them to their destination. On reaching the house where the sick woman lived, the first person to meet the Reverend Father was the doctor, from whom he elicited the leading facts of the case before entering the patient’s room. Mrs. Mar was really dying! She was in the last stage of consumption of the stomach, and could not survive the night. For many months she had been unable to take solid food, and it was now an impossibility for her to retain even a teaspoonful of liquid. This was a summary of the diagnosis.

“Then you can do nothing more for her?” were the Father’s last words, as he wished the doctor good-night; and the latter’s answer was decisive and unconditional, “Absolutely nothing.” With that they parted, the doctor going home, and the Monk preparing to cross the threshold of the chamber of death. But even upon that very threshold a great change swept over him. The Voice of his soul rose up within him, and in the thrill of Its whisper, he knew that, once again, God had elected to use him as the instrument of His Mysteries. It was a command which he dared not

disobey, and with the strange confident impulse which is only given to a child, or the blind, he opened the door, and stood an absolute stranger at the bedside of a woman who was evidently at the point of death.

One of the most startling details of the event now to be related is the extraordinary rapidity with which it was accomplished. Father Ignatius was not more than ten minutes in Mrs. Mar's house from first to last, and certainly less than five in her room. A daughter and son-in-law were watching by the bed when he entered, and these two persons, together with Mother Dorothea, formed the cluster of eye-witnesses who in the future should be able to testify to the veracity of what actually took place.

The Reverend Father's methods are to-day what they must ever have been—original and to the point. On this occasion he merely acted as the passive intermediary of the most Expert of all physicians, so he simply stood within the room and waited.

The Light broke in immediately. "Go forward," said the Voice, "and ask her if she believes on Me!" So, in obedience, the Monk addressed the sick woman as follows: "Do you believe in the Lord Jesus Christ?"

The question was very gently and distinctly uttered, but it remained without an answer. "She can't speak, sir," said the daughter apologetically; "she's been past it this long while." Then the Reverend Father repeated the same words, only with this addition, "If you wish to say 'Yes,' just move your right hand;" and with rapt attention those present watched the weak fingers give an unmistakable token of assent. "Ask her now," said the Voice, "if she believes that I can raise her up." This second question was instantly transmitted, and once again the hand of the dying woman rose feebly in a silent act of Faith. The rest was the work of a few seconds. Laying his hands on her, the Father pronounced the simple words of Resurrection and Life: "In the Name of the Lord Jesus Christ, I say unto thee, *Arise!*"

And at the Monk's injunction, the ebb-tide was stayed,

and the waning embers burst out in flame before the Breath of the Almighty.

"She is quite well now," said Father Ignatius, turning to the daughter and district visitor, who stood pale and speechless at the foot of the bed. "You will send out immediately for a beefsteak, which she will eat to-night. To-morrow she must come to early Mass with you all, in order to return thanks to our Lord for His goodness towards her."

And with that he left the house, those within it remaining thunderstruck at the Power which had been manifested during those tremendous five minutes.

Mrs. Mar *was* quite well! To the stupefaction of all who saw her, she not only ate her prescribed supper, but rising from her bed, she dressed herself without the remotest symptom of distress of any kind. The next morning she walked to St. Bartholomew's, where she was present at the early Celebration, together with those who had witnessed her marvellous recall to life.

From his place at the altar it was not possible for the Father to see every one who was in the church, and fearing that the recovered woman had been remiss in offering her thanks to God by presenting herself in His House of Prayer, he determined to lose no time in ascertaining if she had really been faithful to his directions. Scarcely was Mass over, than he went to Mrs. Mar's house, with the intention of only making inquiries for her at the door; but no sooner had he arrived, than she herself came rushing downstairs to meet him, and begged him to come in. This, however, he at first declined to do, telling Mrs. Mar how surprised and disappointed he had been not to have seen her at church.

"But I *was* there, sir," cried the poor woman, with tears in her eyes. "We were *all* there, and we have only just come back." Her daughter and son-in-law's testimony tended to confirm this assertion, and it is needless to add that from the same hour the Mar family were numbered as grateful and devoted additions to the Monk's already numerous spiritual flock.

Some months later, he learnt from Mrs. Mar that the doctor who had attended her had been so overwhelmed by the shock of her miraculous recovery, that he had been seized with a severe nervous illness, which had kept him in his bed for over six weeks.

I have taken care to present the above singular events in their original colours, and without retouching a single stroke of high light or shadow. It may offend some, but it will comfort many, to know that God's miracles are not always entrusted to those who live in an unbroken ecstasy of automatic predisposition. This biography is intended to portray but not *deify* a great human creation, and I reiterate this distinction for the consolation of those who like myself abhor pedestals, and have an instinctive contempt for the sawdust-stuffed effigies who occupy them.

CHAPTER XXXIV

“JESUS—WHOM I PREACH”

“Now the wondrous change is passing
Over souls long dead in sin ;
See them flocking now to Jesus,
Sheep, His Blood was shed to win.”

ABOUT the end of March 1867, Father Ignatius transplanted his Community from Stoke Newington to a temporary Mission House situated quite near the scene of his labours—St. Bartholomew's, Moor Lane. Here the Brothers remained for three months, pending the acquisition of a permanent Monastery, which it was their Superior's intention to secure as soon as his finances should admit of the necessary outlay.

Meanwhile the Monk himself was preaching to weekly congregations, which seemed to increase visibly as the months went on. In addition to the Sunday Lectures, he was now alternating, by Mr. Denton's permission, his Friday evening Bible Classes with addresses delivered at St. Paul's, Bunhill Row. As Lent approached, an invitation reached him from Mr. Rodwell, the Incumbent of St. Ethelburga's, Bishopsgate Street, asking him to allow his name (as the Rev. J. L. Lyne) to be advertised amongst the list of clergy announced to preach The Passion in that church every day during Holy Week.

Outside his Monastery—where naturally a Rule is observed which admits of few exceptions—the Reverend Father has never been what may be called a stickler for outward and visible signs, particularly when weighed against an opportunity for dispensing the inward and spiritual Grace. In the case in point, he not only consented to doff

his name in religion as suggested, but conceded another modification, this time a detail of vesture. In deference to a wish intimated by the Bishop, he appeared with his scapular unobtrusively bound within his girdle, instead of flowing, and his hood hanging clerical fashion over the shoulders of his surplice, in place of its usual and monastically prescribed disposition.

So long as he could preach the Gospel unrestricted, the rest was of lesser moment, and to this day, the Abbot of Llanthony is possessed of the same spirit of equanimity. During his long and arduous ministry, Father Ignatius has preached Jesus in his Monk's habit, in the conventional surplice, and in the old-world black gown with its quaint accompaniment of Geneva bands, and with unimpaired enjoyment of his subject. With the same happy expansion he has sat on the Salvation Army platform with the Booth family, appeared at the revival meetings of the co-evangelists Moody and Sankey, and preached (by special desire) to one of the largest Roman Catholic Seminaries on the face of the New World. There is grandeur as well as humour in the possession of such a retrospect.

Some years back, an uneasy Bishop wrote to the Reverend Father asking him, not too courteously, in what garment he would preach should he (the Bishop) permit him to occupy a pulpit in his diocese. The answer was immediate and unique. "I will preach," said the Monk, "in whatever your lordship prefers, even though it should be your great-grandmother's green satin dressing-gown!"

After the memorable sermon delivered at St. Ethelburga's on the Wednesday in Holy Week, 1867, neither friend nor foe could ignore the fact that the Benedictine Monk was well on the road to turn London upside down. The scene in church was without parallel, and the police were absolutely impotent in their efforts to control a mass of enthusiastic humanity which had assembled long before the hour announced for the opening of the doors. Even when admission was granted, the danger was not lessened. A formidable stampede ensued, in which many persons were

seriously hurt and buffeted, and in an instant every seat and square inch of available standing-room was filled to overflowing.

It was in vain that the police closed the doors on those already within, and strove to convince the less fortunate that it was impossible to force an entrance. Their efforts were bitterly resented, and the climax received a new impetus from the arrival of the Father himself, who with the utmost difficulty reached the door of the church, and begged the constable in charge to pass him in.

This movement was the signal for a second rush, and the crowd surging in desperately in the Monk's wake, the police lost all command of the door. A species of free fight ensued. Those already packed into the building resisted the intrusion of those outside, and the Reverend Father, who at that time was an uncommonly light weight, lost his footing completely, and was swept helplessly up the aisle, like a leaf before the gale. When he was at length able to realise the geography of his surroundings, he found himself deposited bodily upon the person of an elderly gentleman, whom in his irresponsible progress he had precipitated into a sitting position upon the waist-line of an exceedingly stout old lady. People were knocked down on all sides like a pack of cards, and outside the church the confusion was yet greater. In Bishopsgate Street itself the road traffic was entirely blocked. Carts, omnibuses, and vehicles of all descriptions were huddled together at a hopeless standstill, and the police concentrating all their attention on the narrow passage which led from the street into the church, had the greatest difficulty in preventing actual loss of life, so persistent was the crowd in trying to force an entrance through this inconvenient and dangerous breach.

But stormy and emotional as was its prelude, this single sermon was destined to be a red-letter record for the biographer of many years to come. The text chosen was, "A ram caught in a thicket," and the dissertation set forth the significance of Abraham's sacrifice of an innocent

victim, and its prophetic foreshadowing of the Supreme Sacrifice of the Sinless offered once for all on Calvary. The theme was a glorious one, and it was handled with an originality and power which held the congregation breathless.

Within an hour's space the monastic cause had gained several new pillars, the Father more than one devoted follower, and the sleeping-sickness of fashionable Christianity, a stimulating antidote to the subtle poison that was slowly undermining its vitality.

The impression produced by the Monk's words was supreme. At the conclusion of the service, two ladies who had been specially blessed, followed him back to Mr. Denton's house, and begged permission to enroll their names as Third Order Sisters of the Benedictine Congregation. These new friends proved to be most devout and active benefactors of the Reverend Father's enterprise, and as Sister Frances and Sister Winifred they still occupy very special and prominent places amongst the supporters of Llanthony and its Abbot. Later on, Sister Frances had the privilege of succeeding a less worthy representative as Prioress of the Third Order, while Sister Winifred became one of the founders of the present Abbey, contributing a generous sum of £1000 towards the purchase of the property.

The year 1867 brought many recruits to the standard of St. Benedict, and it was likewise remarkable for the renewing of a very valuable friendship formed some four years back at the Bristol Congress, where for the first time the monastic bombshell was hurled by the Monk Ignatius into the official bosom of his country's Church. The Rev. Douglas Boutflower—a devout naval chaplain—happened to be one of the multitude in the Hall of Congress and also at the evening Lecture which closed this historical episode, and his sympathies were powerfully enlisted on the side of the Revival. Since that date he had already paid the Norwich Community a visit, but he was a busy as well as a pious man, and between his own consecutive voyages and the dispersion of the Elm Hill congregation,

the links of intercourse had somehow become loosened. But "Father Bernard" (as he is best known at Llanthony) was destined to be too deeply involved in the crowning point of his friend's life—the building of his beautiful Abbey—to drift altogether out of the near horizon of events. The Sunday evenings at St. Bartholomew's were the means of cementing this lapsed but unforgotten affinity, and from that time forward the two friends enjoyed an unalterable, though sometimes an interrupted intimacy, which only ceased when the sailor-priest was called to his rest, leaving Llanthony to mourn the passing of a loyal and faithful soul. Father Bernard's good works will of necessity receive more special mention in the last chapters of this book. In this page I shall only note, that on learning from the Reverend Father the disgraceful fraud by which he had been robbed of his Norwich home, Mr. Boutflower offered to assure the rent of any temporary Monastery which the Superior might find suitable for the installation of his Brothers, prior to the purchase of a permanent property, when circumstances and funds should allow of the development.

In the spring of the same year, Mr. Denton let his house in Finsbury Circus to some Quakers who came to London for their annual May Assembly, and removed meanwhile with his family to a house on the borders of Epping Forest, in order to combine the benefit of country air with an easy access to his town duties. This house happened to be owned by a retired officer, a converted Jew, by name Mr. Lamert. The Dentons occupied one-half of the house, Mr. Lamert and his family the other. The religious opinions in the landlord's household can scarcely be described as unanimous. The old man himself was a Particular Baptist—a persuasion which combines much really beautiful Evangelism with a few angular peculiarities which could well be laid aside. Mrs. and Miss Lamert, on the other hand, aspired to be fashionable—they were High Church in the most exalted sense of the term. The Monk, who was a constant visitor (by Mr. Denton's invitation) at this country

cottage, was naturally thrown much into the society of the Lamert family, and from the first, the simple piety of the aged ex-officer attracted and delighted him. It was in vain that Mrs. Lamert assured him that if her husband "only knew he was a Monk, he would have a fit and die." A strong sympathy grew about the intercourse between these two opposite natures, and their mutual love for the same Divine Master drew them irresistibly together with the polarity of the magnet. Many and peaceful were the strolls and talks they had together, the only jarring note that ever ruffled these occasions arising from the dear old gentleman's sectarianism, which expanded itself in a withering contempt for those degenerate fellow Baptists who, unlike himself, had not joined the "Particular" denomination, but were content to be numbered among the common or garden "Generals." Mr. Lamert could not bring himself to walk upon the same pavement as an outsider "General," but with his elect brethren he would never fail to exchange an affectionate and pious greeting.

Some of these quaint salutations impressed the Reverend Father not a little by their picturesque touches. One day, when walking with Mr. Lamert, they chanced to meet another venerable "Particular," who accosted his colleague in the following primitive manner: "Well, Brother, what of the way?" And the Brother, tacitly tuning his spirit to the same key, made answer: "Bright and glorious, and the dear Lord as good as ever, only the mountains are a little steep sometimes."

By what was perhaps a providential coincidence, Mr. Lamert never learned the monastic identity of his friend "Mr. Lyne." One day he went to London expressly to hear him preach, and returned, according to his own expression, "both blessed and sweetly fed." Two years later the good old soldier fell asleep in Jesus—the King whose colours he had carried in his own quaint fashion so faithfully and long.

Fortified financially as he then was by Father Bernard's substantial promise of pecuniary help, it only remained for the Superior to select a provisional home for his Monks,

where they might keep their Rule undisturbed, and in the seclusion which its observance necessitated. The Reverend Father still had a lurking hope of being able to settle finally at Llanthony, but up till now his ambition did not soar higher than an indefinite desire to restore the ruined Priory, which is situated some four miles lower down the Valley than his present Monastery. Mr. Landor, the owner of the property, was applied to through his agent, but as he did not seem inclined to favour the incursion of Monks into the Valley of Ewyas, the negotiations, though prolonged and various, fell finally through. That this disappointment only postponed but in no wise frustrated the Reverend Father's determination to plant his Corner Stone in the heart of the Black Mountains, is a patent fact to all who have had a glimpse of the beautiful Shrine of Supplication and Adoration hidden still higher away among the silent hills, or those who have only heard the voice of the great St. Bernard Bell calling Christians to their "Venite adoremus" before the gorgeous Tabernacle in the Abbey Church.

In June 1867, thanks to Mr. Boutflower's generosity, the Benedictine Community was enabled to secure by a three years' lease, a small and uncomely red brick house at Laleham, a Thames-side village not far from Staines. By the addition of a Cloister door or two, and a grille by which seculars and women might be communicated with by those within Enclosure, this habitation was adapted to the needs of a temporary Monastery, an outer lodge or cottage belonging to the property being converted into a shelter for the waifs and wayfarers who are never slow to avail themselves of the hospitality traditional to a residence of Monks. The coach-house which adjoined the new Priory was reserved as a chapel, and this at certain hours was thrown open for the admission of the public—a step which was keenly appreciated by the somewhat mystified but at all times kindly disposed natives. And thus, though modified to a minor key, the Norwich days were lived anew, and the long-suffering Community had an official roof over their heads, which they were destined to quit three

years later in a triumphal exodus to their own immortal Abbey of St. Mary and St. David Llanthony.

Laleham Priory was rented at the low figure of £35 per annum, and as the Superior's work lay so largely at this period amongst the several churches of the City district and their congregations, it was found necessary to "run" a metropolitan Mission House in conjunction with the Monastery, for the sake of the more secular business connected with the work. A Third Order Sister, who was also an intimate friend of the Dentons, undertook to find and provide premises suitable for this purpose, and a house in Hunter Street, Brunswick Square (No. 51), was finally settled upon, partly on account of its central position, but also by reason of the Monk's affection for the near neighbourhood of his childhood's home.

Meantime at St. Bartholomew's, Moor Lane, a little cloud was gradually rising between the learned Vicar and his friend, the Sunday Lecturer. There was no disguising the fact, that the Monk's influence over the congregation was supreme, not to say exclusive, and before many months were over, Mr. Denton awoke to the unflattering conviction that he himself was little more than a cipher, and that his whole parish was swaying like a pendulum beneath the finger tips of a new-comer young enough to be his son. The reflection was scarcely reassuring, and it served to give the green-eyed monster a gentle shake up. It was "Mr. Lyne" here, and "Mr. Lyne" there. "Was he going to preach?" and "When was he to be seen next?" The Vicarage door was assailed with questions and letters, and by the end of the summer the Dentonian simmer of injured feelings had progressively "boiled up" into open expostulation. It was a crisis which was bound to be relieved by fireworks. The Vicar declined in future to answer any inquiries concerning Mr. Lyne, or to announce the names of the preachers at forthcoming services. He also informed the Monk that he objected to the way in which he held a levée in the church after preaching, and that he intended to have the gas turned out at the close of the service, so

that the congregation should be forced to disperse immediately.

It was the sermon preached on the 8th of September 1867 which finally gave the Monk reason to think that he would do well to transfer his services to one or two of the many other City pulpits which were constantly placed at his disposal by their respective owners, but he was anxious if possible to merit and obtain the promised Priesthood at the close of the year, so he determined to have patience and persevere. Added to these personal considerations, he was sincerely attached to Mr. Denton, from whom he had received many kindnesses, as well as from all the members of his family, and for this cause also he strove heroically to keep the peace.

In point of fact, it was ultimately by the zealous but mistaken intervention of a devoted Brother that his resignation was wrung from him. It had long been one of the Monk's dreams to address a Jewish congregation on the theme of the re-peopling of the Holy Country with her own sons and daughters, and Mr. Denton had already given his patronage to the scheme. Father Ignatius, on his side, had had a sympathetic talk with the Chief Rabbi on the subject, the venerable Dr. Adler having received him with the greatest kindness at his own house in Finsbury Square. The Rabbi had willingly promised the attendance of his congregation, and a general undercurrent of expectancy and enthusiasm seemed to pervade the whole affair. Unfortunately however, a single gust of effervescent zeal set all the fiddle-strings jangling out of tune. Brother Bede assumed the initiative, and without consulting the Vicar, or any oracle save his own impulse, he caused the neighbourhood of St. Bartholomew's to be placarded with posters announcing the event. The date, place, and name of the preacher were proclaimed on all sides in letters which literally smote the sleepy public eye; and Mr. Denton becoming aware of the fact, resented it as most fellow-occupants of "the shelf" would likewise have done.

"Mr. Lyne," he said loftily, when expressing his wish to

have a few words on this breezy subject, "it is perfectly true that I have given my approval to this sermon being preached in my church, but inasmuch as I am the Vicar, I intend to preach it myself." And the Reverend Father, with a cheerful "Very good, Mr. Denton," expressed neither surprise nor vexation at his decision. There was a half-blown smile, nevertheless, lurking somewhere up his sleeve. Mrs. Denton had already taken him aside and initiated him into the mysteries of her husband's temperament, so he was prepared for the emergency.

Not until the clergy were actually assembling in the vestry on the advertised date, and Mr. Denton had taken a bird's-eye peep at the densely packed congregation which filled every nook and corner of the church, did the Reverend Father know whether he was to preach his Crusade to Zion or not. At the last moment only, but with every symptom of an impromptu seizure, the Vicar came to him with a hasty whisper: "I am feeling so very ill, Mr. Lyne, that I am quite unequal to the sermon. I must ask you to take my place." And thus it came to pass that (as every one had foreseen in the Vicarage *entourage*) it was the Monk himself who knocked at the heart of Israel, and prophesied from the Christian pulpit that memorable forecast of the return of the Holy People to the Land of the Patriarchs, which exactly thirty years later was fulfilled by the promulgation of the Zionite Movement—to-day one of the most burning topics that engrosses the Jewish Press.

The effect of this sermon was manifold. Not long after, was commenced by the earnest invitation of the Incumbent—the Rev. Pascoe Hill—that celebrated series of Friday midday services in St. Edmund's, Lombard Street, which later on culminated in the disgraceful riot, when Sir Richard Mayne had to call out his mounted police to disperse 60,000 people who were blocking the thoroughfare from the Bank right through to Gracechurch Street, in order to molest a single man, and that a defenceless Monk.

These services, intended chiefly for City men, were from the outset attended by crowds of "human various," and

upon the Reverend Father resigning his post at St. Bartholomew's, which he did in the November of the same year, Mr. Hill begged that he would transfer his Sunday evening Lectures to his church also—an offer that was temporarily accepted.

It is deeply to be regretted that the friendly relations existing between Mr. Denton and the Monk were destined to be ruptured before the close of the official year, but it was evident even to the most casual of onlookers that after the Jewish sermon of September the 8th, the worthy Vicar's cup of grievances had received its last drop. From that day forward he took ill-judged and aggressive measures of showing his resentment. In order that no one should speak a word to the Father at the conclusion of the services, the gas was extinguished with such alarming rapidity, that the ladies in the congregation were fain to flee down the aisles, if they wished to avoid the disagreeable necessity of groping through a darkened church. On one occasion, Mrs. Lyne, desiring to speak with her son, waited for him near the door for that purpose, but notwithstanding the fact of her well-known identity, the lights were peremptorily turned out in her very face—an act of flagrant discourtesy which greatly incensed her entire family. Quite a cluster had assembled that evening to catch a glimpse of their favourite preacher as he left the church, and as they divined the Vicar's intention in economising his gas, they determined to go instead to Finsbury Circus and see the Monk safely within the Vicarage door. But Mr. Denton had foreseen this contingency. For some perverse reason known only to himself, he insisted that the Father should accompany him through the vestry and by a back way home. Once arrived upon the doorstep, he rang incessantly until the door was opened, whereupon he pushed the Monk within the hall with so little ceremony, that the latter lost his balance and narrowly escaped falling headlong upon his face.

This foolish episode brought matters to a crisis. Even at the price of postponing his Priesthood, the Lyne family

were determined that Father Ignatius should run no risk of a second edition of such treatment. In another six weeks his obligations to Mr. Denton would have been accomplished, but in spite of this consideration, great pressure was brought to bear upon the alternative, and he was induced to tender his resignation forthwith.

On the one hand, it is to be regretted that in consequence of this action the Monk's promotion to the Anglican Higher Orders should have lapsed, but on the other, it may be accounted almost as a Providential reservation. If the course of events had run smooth—according to the way of the world—Father Ignatius would at this moment be a Priest of the English Church, whose Apostolic Authenticity is loudly challenged by every Communion except its own. Whereas by a painful postulancy of thirty-eight years in the Diaconate of the same Establishment, he has had time to fathom the fundamentals of Purple Tapeism, and finally to step over them, by accepting Orders from a Church whose antiquity and validity are unquestioned, by the combined Arbitrators of conglomerate Christendom.

The notes concerning 1867 close with more than one interesting little detail. To Laleham Priory came an unexpected visitor in the shape of a Roman Catholic Priest—a certain Father Lohrum, by birth a Bavarian. This good Padre used to say his Roman Mass daily at the High Altar in the improvised chapel, and although he was perfectly aware that the Community was an Anglican one, the affection which he conceived for his surroundings was quite touching. Father Lohrum stayed many weeks at the little Priory, but his tranquillity was somewhat ruffled by an Inquisitorial descent which Cardinal Manning caused to be made upon him during the latter period of his visit. The sturdy Bavarian elected nevertheless to stand his ground. He was not, he argued, saying Mass in a parish church, but in a monastic chapel, which was extra-diocesan, and therefore beyond the pale of jurisdiction. And upon the strength of this precedent, he quietly ignored the admonition, and persevered.

The only difficulty attached to the offices of this Roman Father was his mode of administering Communion. Whereas Father Ignatius entertained (as he does to this day) an invincible repugnance to the suppression of the Chalice, Father Lohrum on his side was equally tenacious of dispensing the greatest of all Sacraments in strict accordance with the discipline of his own Church. Finally a compromise was adopted, which, even if it was canonically ambiguous, seems to have bridged over the scruples of both sides. With the exception of a single concession, Father Lohrum was to say his Roman Mass inviolate, while the Monk and his congregation were to be safeguarded from receiving what Anglican orthodoxy would express as an incomplete Sacrament. After consecrating the Elements in both kinds, the celebrant was to proceed to the distribution of the Sacred Hosts, leaving the Chalice with Its contents unconsumed at the discretion of the Superior, who in his capacity of English Deacon would remove the same from the altar and administer It to the communicants.

Another interesting visitor to the newly fledged Monastery was the celebrated Dr. Lee of All Saints', Lambeth. The chief object of this visit was a preliminary tentative to induce the Reverend Father, later on, to join the much discussed Order of "Corporate Reunion," which, as the reader is probably aware, was the name given to an elaborate but barren enterprise for the amalgamation of the Roman and Anglican Churches. For some time it was mooted that Father Ignatius was one of the three Bishops consecrated by a Dutch Jansenist Prelate on board ship in the English Channel, in connection with this same movement, but the supposition is absolutely imaginary. The Monk's heart and soul were welded indissolubly into his own individual Revival, and he had no superfluous thoughts to bestow on a scheme fraught with such illimitable possibilities and labour.

A vivid supernatural touch is connected with Dr. Lee's visit to the Laleham Priory. It is one which will specially

interest those who know Llanthony well, and are familiar with the phantom Monk who is so constantly seen in the Abbey Church and Enclosure. The first time that this apparition ever made its presence felt by the Community, was at Laleham in the little improvised chapel, and at the moment when Dr. Lee was in the act of administering Holy Communion to the Superior and one other Monk. Only two were to receive on that occasion, and only two *did* receive, but at the conclusion of the Mass, Dr. Lee asked the Reverend Father "who was the *third* Brother, whom when he approached him with the Precious Body, suddenly drew his hood over his head and hurried away without communicating?" It was with the greatest difficulty, and only after considerable argument and conclusive evidence, that Father Ignatius was able to convince his visitor that no one in the flesh had knelt before him, save himself (the Superior) and the *one* Brother already mentioned.

This phenomenon awoke no light flutter of sensation in the quiet Community, the more so because Dr. Lee was well known to be an occasional seer of sights invisible, and a personality whose reputation lifted him far above the level of a plausible liar or morbid rigmarolist.

Since that day "the Monk," as he is called at Llanthony, has "walked" at frequent but irregular intervals among his Benedictine Brethren. He has been seen by many both at nightfall and in broad daylight, but up to the present hour the purport of his wanderings remains a mystery. At times he is seen carrying a covered lamp of old-world fashion, but as a rule his hands are folded away under his scapular and his hood drawn closely over his bowed head. Those who have had a glimpse of his face describe it as pale and handsome, its expression denoting deep but not ungentle melancholy. Amongst those who have been confronted with this apparition are the Abbot himself, several clergy and visitors—one of the last-named being a near relation of my own.

It would be most interesting, both from the Christian and psychological standpoint, to read the riddle of this

derelict spirit, but as yet his visitations have been transitory and silent.

The Reverend Father, in especial, is devoutly anxious to fathom the mystery. For this end he has expressed a desire that any one meeting the unhappy being should accost him, and in the name of the Lord Jesus bid him say if by any earthly means his rest may be obtained.

"The Monk" has already been the object of many prayers both at Llanthony and elsewhere. Only a short time ago, a Roman Catholic—the wife of one of the Anglican clergy who had seen the apparition while at the Monastery—wrote to the Reverend Father asking if the wandering spirit still walked, because when recently at Rome, she had caused several Masses to be said for his repose.

Up to the day that these words reach the printer, it would seem that the enigma is still unsolved. Only a few nights ago, the phantom is said to have reappeared, and the Abbot is still exhorting every one to address it in the name of the God of Peace, should Divine Permission allow it to cross their path.

Time alone can decide whether so charitable a consummation will be vouchsafed. Students of the occult should find delight in following this track, and in identifying the human hand to whom the torch of final investigation may one day be committed.

CHAPTER XXXV

“BECAUSE OF EVIL-DOERS”

“Let the waves toss and foam,
They bring me nearer Home,
Whence I shall never roam,
For Jesus rules the waves!”

MORE than one interesting association marks the somewhat hurried farewell which Father Ignatius was impelled to take of St. Bartholomew's, Moor Lane.

Towards the close of his officiate, the new Bishop of Cape Town (Dr. Grey, by whose devoted efforts the Colenso infidelities were investigated and exposed) was announced to preach at St. Michael's, Shoreditch, on one of the identical Friday evenings when, in accordance with his convention, the Monk was holding his Bible Class in the Parochial School Room. The occasion for a public rally round this faithful soldier of Christ was a propitious one, and the Reverend Father, who had no difficulty in enthusing his flock with a far-off replica of his own zeal, prevailed on them to accompany him then and there to Shoreditch, in order to greet the good Bishop and solicit his blessing. St. Michael's was situated over half a mile away from St. Bartholomew's, but the prospect of this proposed tramp seemed rather an incentive than otherwise to the ardour of the nearly three hundred souls assembled that night at the feet of their intrepid leader.

The project was no sooner conceived than put into execution. In a few moments' time the procession of pilgrims started, men marshalled by twos together, heading the ranks, the rear being represented by an equally orderly band of women. When at length, after exciting much

astonishment and a little confusion amongst bystanders along the route, the mysterious regiment arrived at its destination, St. Michael's Church was already filled, and Bishop Grey installed in the pulpit in the act of opening his discourse. The first impression caused by the incursion of the numerous new-comers was scarcely reassuring. They were thought to be a mob of rabid Colensoites come to protest against the ex-Bishop's Primate, until their pacific attitude and the evident reverence with which they one and all knelt in the aisles and available empty spaces, effectually belied such a misapprehension.

To Dr. Grey himself, the deputation was not a surprise, Father Ignatius having sent him word earlier in the evening of his desire to bring his Bible Class to receive the blessing of so distinguished a defender of the Faith. With courteous consideration for those who had come so far out of their way, and at a spontaneous sacrifice of time and trouble, the Bishop showed his appreciation of their zeal, by interrupting his sermon and forthwith giving a special benediction, in lieu of causing the Reverend Father's flock to wait until the close of the service, which, in the case of most, would have been an impossibility. This unconventional incident, although only a wayside trifle, serves to show how, even in those early days, the extirpation of infidelity from his country's Church was an absorbing preoccupation to the man who has since become the Nimrod of ecclesiastical wolves, the mighty hunter of all sorts and conditions of hirelings who seek to undermine the strength and unity of the Fold of Christ.

With the year 1868 drifted in many important landmarks to the biographical map. There were now eight Monks in Community, and for the first time the profession of two to life vows was permitted. It is a popular error to suppose that Father Ignatius has professed his Novices lightly or indiscriminately. During the forty years that he has been Superior of his Order, and despite the number of aspirants which have passed through his hands, only seven have been allowed to touch the highest note of cloistered

life, and of these seven, Father Philip and Father Dunstan were the first. Their final vows were taken in the Priory Chapel at Laleham, and not long afterwards, this event was followed by one of even greater interest—the admission to postulancy and novitiate of the first Benedictine enclosed Nun since the days of the Reformation.

Sister Ella, one of Miss Sellon's Sisters of Mercy at the Abbey, Plymouth, had known the Reverend Father since the year 1861 (at Canon Prynne's), and no sooner did he announce his intention of starting a twin Community, according to the precedent of the old Saxon Abbeys, than she determined to become a Benedictine Nun—an ambition which she had hitherto been unable to realise, owing to the non-existence of an Anglican enclosed Order.

This lady's admission was likewise celebrated in the Monastery Chapel. As “Mother Hilda,” she subsequently became Prioress of the cloistered Convent of Nuns, which was inaugurated later in the same year, at Feltham, six miles from Laleham, where in a charming seventeenth-century farmhouse the second indelible chapter of an historical Revival was handed to the type-setter Time.

Needless to say, these new developments gave the Reverend Father a ceaseless protraction of labour and anxiety which he was physically unequal to meet, but he had no thought except for the manipulation of the mighty ball that his individual efforts had at last unearthed and set rolling through the land. Every day that passed had now become a fresh and crowded page of life. The weekly programme was indeed an arduous one. From Monday to Thursday inclusive, the Superior divided his time between his two Communities of Monks and Nuns, and every Friday he resumed his duties in the world, transacting business in the Hunter Street Mission House, and fulfilling engagements at the different churches to which he was at that time attached. These weekly sermons were preached at St. Edmund's, Lombard Street, on Fridays midday, and on Sunday evenings, also at St. Paul's, Bunhill Row, every

Friday night, large crowds from all parts of London filling the churches on every occasion.

There is so much tragedy to be recorded before three months of this eventful year were completed, that it is unusually refreshing to linger in the few green spots of incident which precede the final deepening of the shadow.

In the Mission House, 51 Hunter Street, several important acquaintances were formed, amongst them those of the Rev. Alfred Locock and Mrs. Locock, who to this day are central figures in the group of the Monk's personal friends, and Dr. Nolan—the Incumbent of St. Peter's, Regent Square—with whose surviving family the Reverend Father has never since lost constant and affectionate touch.

In the midst of a life-story where desertion and treachery of all kinds have risen so constantly like scum to the surface, it is doubly delightful to turn down a well-filled index of friends who through good report and evil, fair weather and foul, have never wavered in their faithful loyalty to a cause which has certainly found more favour with God than man.

In presenting to the general reader the multiplex and terrible chronicles of the years 1868–69, I am fully aware of the direct challenge which I am giving to criticism of every shape and colour. The necessity for so doing, is however imperative. I shall therefore approach this portion of my work without preamble, saving the suggestion that those in whom it may awake a note of sympathy, should bestow it not only on the Monk and public personality, but still more on the individual—the Christian man, to whose highly sensitive and emotional nature such an ordeal must have spelt an agony and repulsion beyond words. That the burden of this suffering was devotedly shared by the Reverend Father's never-failing friend—his mother—goes without saying. For fourteen bitter years Mrs. Lyne endured the many cruel wrongs and injustices which were heaped upon her favourite child, and at the end of that time she sank under them, literally hurried to her

grave by a perpetual crucifixion which she had no longer the physical strength to survive. It was not only the attacks of the open enemy that cost this gentle and brave spirit its flight. There was a still deadlier iron at work within her womanly susceptibility—the knowledge that her beloved Monk was systematically repudiated by the very authorities who wear the Purple Robe as salaried defenders of a Gospel which he so faithfully preached and practised. Another member of the Lyne family to whom the persecutions of these two fatal years dealt a heavy blow, was Clavering Lyne, the Reverend Father's youngest brother, and an ardent participator in all his interests and busy enterprises. To Mr. Lyne (the elder), the flagrant slanders and misrepresentations by which he saw his unhappy son surrounded, were sources of an exhilaration not altogether out of harmony with his temperament, and he rose like a lion on the defensive. Whether by personal intervention or public protest through the daily Press, the voice of this intrepid parent made itself heard throughout the country. I feel it a special duty to emphasise this fact, for a very generally believed mis-statement is current, to the effect that Father Ignatius and his father lived divided lives ever since the assumption by the former of the Benedictine habit. This is absolute fiction. Despite the pronounced dissimilarity of religious views which had always existed between the two, Mr. Lyne both loved and revered his Monk-son, and there is little doubt but that he would have continued to do so until the day of his death, had not the Reverend Father been subsequently chosen by him to arbitrate in a family matter where common justice demanded a verdict in favour of the opposing side.

I must now refer the reader to a previous chapter dealing with the mutiny which took place at Elm Hill Priory, during the residence of the Community in the Monastery at Norwich. I have already shown the disastrous result brought about by the introduction of an infamous character, on the personal recommendation of no less an authority than the Founder of the Holy Cross

Society—the Reverend John Chambers, Incumbent of St. Mary's, Soho.

That this powerful passport was given in good faith is beyond argument, but it cannot mitigate the direful consequences of which it was wholly and solely the cause. In admitting Brother Stanislaus into his little family of Monks, Father Ignatius was actuated by unbounded confidence in the integrity of the man's testimonials, and later on, when expelling him as a degenerate, he was equally convinced that by so doing, his Monastery would be purged from the contagion of such a presence. But the infamy of Stanislaus had burrowed into depths which the Superior had never dreamed of sounding, and the nightmare of this knowledge was now, after a lapse of more than two years, to rise and strike him a deadly blow in the very heart of his honour as a Christian, a Monk, and an English gentleman. There are some moral wounds which leave a red and rugged scar. This was one of them.

Those who know the wherefore, can scarcely wonder that Father Ignatius shudders by instinct at the word Protestant, albeit that not a few of his dearest friends may be numbered amongst the Christian ranks of this curiously assorted religious section. The Monk's previous experiences at Ipswich, Claydon, and Norwich had left him but small illusion as to the fragrance which his name had the power of imparting to the nostrils of his old enemies the Polemics, but they certainly had not prepared him for the crushing injury he was about to suffer at their hands. It is but just to add, that in this acute crisis of his life, the Reverend Father received nothing but sympathy from any Bishop who expressed his opinion on the subject, and with one notorious exception, from his fellow-clergy likewise. The missiles were hurled solely from one direction—that of the so-called professing Protestants—and it is a strange and disgraceful fact, that despite the strongly Evangelical side which has always counterbalanced the broad-lined Catholicism of the Monk's theology, the animosity of this relentless denomination has pursued him throughout his entire lifetime

with a venom far exceeding that imputed by their own historians to the Grand Inquisitors or the sons of Loyola.

It is only one possessed of the "little child's" faith who could have breasted the waters of so deep and merciless a plot. Father Ignatius believed the words of Jesus, "In the world ye shall have tribulation," and he leaned upon the Divine assurance, "Fear not! I have overcome the world." Had this not been so, his name would to-day be that of a dead man, forgotten and out of mind. Yet even while the Christian and the Monk took up the Cross and followed, the agony of *the man* was as great drops of blood. But there is a prohibitive angel set at the gates of all human Gethsemanes, and his office is to cross swords with the intrusive outside pen.

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"STARTLING DISCLOSURES ABOUT FATHER IGNATIUS."

At the height of the Reverend Father's success as a London preacher, at the very moment when after six years' labour the spring-time of Anglican Monasticism seemed at last to be green with the promise of substantial development, the newspaper world became a Babel with the war of tongues let loose upon their natural prey—a new sensation. This time the pioneer was a clergyman, the Incumbent of an outlying London parish, an advanced Protestant, who deemed any means justifiable for the delivery of his Reformed Church from the contamination of the Popish pestilence. Aided by the collaboration of a lady who entertained similar views and possessed the extra advantage of living at Norwich (the field chosen for operation), this man organised an elaborate scheme by which he intended to achieve the Monk's personal ruin, and through his downfall to bury once and for ever the pickaxe of monasticism, whose growing propensities he could not affect to ignore.

For this purpose, the lowest and most abominable means were resorted to. Meetings were convened weekly at the Hanover Square Rooms, at which, in addition to addresses

by well-known Polemics, literature of a most scurrilous nature was distributed, purporting to reveal the abominations committed at the Norwich Monastery under the cloak of a Christian Community. To substantiate and give spice to these slanders, the wretched ex-Novice Stanislaus and the boy whom he had induced to join him in his disgraceful vagabondage were posed as leading attractions on the platform, the wily manager relying greatly on the plausibility of their carefully rehearsed "testimonies" to play on the credulity of his audience. Further features of poignant interest were added to the programme, by the appearance of several youths from Norwich, former members of the St. William's Guild connected with the Reverend Father's Monastery, who were from time to time called upon to stand forth and corroborate the overwhelming accusations formulated by their elders. Scandalous and damning as were the innuendoes suggested, these rascals had the wisdom (if not the decency) to refrain from attacking their victim in the open, by allusions of a personal nature. Their aim was to brand the Norwich Community as a hotbed of unnameable iniquity, presided over by a Superior unworthy of the title, who had been either too callous or too idle to root out an evil which was daily ripening and rotting under his very nose. There was no mincing up so foul a matter. Such a man must be a fool or a devil, and to this obvious conclusion the clerical liar had no difficulty in leading his hearers, with a result that may be easily imagined.

With the exception of the Father's own friends, who were happily many and devoted, the public hair literally rose upon its head, and what was still more formidable, the Press showed premonitory symptoms of crowding out the indignant and emphatic protest with which the Monk repudiated the loathsome aspersions cast upon himself and his Religious House. Perhaps it was by a national impulse that the body of English editors made a simultaneous rush for the Protestant side, but the step lacked justice, and met with its reward—failure. At the height of the crisis, and when every door seemed closely shut, the Hand of God

interposed and turned the tables of "disclosures" on the guilty parties. Two remarkable things happened almost in the same breath. One editor among the many (who must have been somewhat mentally exalted above his fellows) suddenly placed his columns at the Reverend Father's disposal, and generously offered to publish whatsoever protest or explanation he might elect to send him. At the same time, one of the chief actors in the Protestant drama remembered that he had a conscience, and most inconveniently gave the whole show away by turning informer, and treating the public to a few eye-opening peeps behind the scenes.

Thus it came to pass that this infamous and deeply-laid plot collapsed with the mere pin-prick of a boy's remorse, and that its exposure was consummated in the *Morning Advertiser*, through the courtesy of the editor. Those who care to turn up the file of this date will be able to study the circumstances in detail, but for the benefit of the average busy reader, I herewith sum up the headings of the aggression, taking as my referees for accuracy two of its principal participators, the man Stanislaus and the repentant lad, whose letters lie before me as I pen these words.

The ecclesiastical Guy Fawkes who had neglected his own parish duties to lay a train of gunpowder beneath the feet of an unoffending colleague, had distributed his explosives with much subtle skill, but at the same time with a clumsy touch of that counteractive stupidity which is so often the downfall of whole masterpieces of villainy. In the first place, he chose for his tools either out-and-out scoundrels who would swear away their souls if paid to do so, or young and ignorant lads—weaklings—to be easily lured by a few glasses of beer and a whiff of notoriety, to forget their better selves and patter like parrots whatever words were thrust within their lips.

By what some might call a lucky chance, and others Divine forethought, it so happened that one of these revealing youths was a godson of the Reverend Father's, a boy who in the days of Elm Hill Priory had been a Novice

in the Community, and a very special object of the Superior's affection and solicitude. Although he unfortunately figured as a leader amongst the many dupes who were magnetised from Norwich to "appear" in the Hanover Square Rooms, at the expense of their spiritual father and benefactor, the lad's heart was not long in rushing back into its right place, with an impulse of horror and remorse which he dared neither question nor control. One evening, when the Monk had just concluded his sermon in St. Edmund's, Lombard Street, and had returned with Mr. Pascoe Hill to the latter's house, to rest, this prodigal son suddenly presented himself before his deeply injured Superior and besought his forgiveness. The boy's story was simple but terrible. He and several others had been led away by bribes and promises to become the mouthpieces of a systematic perjury. The clergyman who was the mainspring and lever of the whole conspiracy, had not only persuaded his victims by every argument of specious exhortation to stand up like men and support the Protestantism of Old England, but he had paved their progress with the coin of the realm—the price of innocent blood.

This was not the worst. These youths were boldly prompted to deliver a tirade of lies. They were brought, free of expense, from Norwich, lodged as guests at the "clergyman's" house, and deliberately coached and rehearsed in the respective parts which they were to be called upon to play. Money and drink were the wages offered for these services, and according to the evidence gathered at the time, the "goings on" that were inaugurated in this so-called Christian vicarage, must have far out-heroded those reported to have been perpetrated in the Elm Hill Monastery during the absence of its Superior. The scandal was wholesale and unblushing. Those boys who were too stupid or terrified to realise what they were expected to say, were planted on the platform like pantomime dummies, and had written statements thrust into their hands, which at a given signal they read aloud, in corroboration of some foregoing statistic announced in their names.

The miserable president of this nineteenth-century

Reformation had met with an appropriate affinity in the person of “Brother Stanislaus,” but, as is often the case with degenerates, their friendship was nothing but the tinkling of a few brazen cymbals, and at the first hint of danger it dwindled visibly, then finally crumbled to dust. No sooner had the Reverend Father heard his godson’s story and forgiven him the disastrous initiative which, under cleverly applied temptation, the poor lad had himself contributed to the enemy’s cause, than Stanislaus bethought him of the expediency of likewise asking pardon of the man he had so cruelly wronged. It may interest the reader, and it will certainly gratify the biographer, if, as an independent sidelight on this unhappy episode, a portion of the Monk’s own letter in the *Morning Advertiser* of April 3rd, 1868, is reproduced. It will serve to demonstrate, far better than I could express, the abject attitude assumed by this unscrupulous ex-Novice, when once he felt himself to be worsted, and realised the necessity of a rapid and plausible show of sackcloth.

Excepting the omission of a few names, which for charitable reasons Father Ignatius directs me to leave in blank, the following is a faithful copy of the Monk’s own communication on the subject, including two letters from Stanislaus, and one from the godson to whose plucky visit of reparation the bursting of the bubble was due. Such wholesale desertion from the ranks of the clerical crusader against the “errors of Ritualism” (as he chose to label his assault upon a brother of the cloth) must have meant to this reverend but misguided pugilist the digestion of more than one tough morsel, but inasmuch as he richly deserved the humiliation, I have no compunction in recording it against him on the public black-board. These are the Reverend Father’s reflections addressed to the Editor by whose kindness they saw daylight in the columns of the London Press :—

(Extract from *MORNING ADVERTISER*, April 3rd, 1868.)

ALLEGED "STARTLING DISCLOSURES ABOUT FATHER
IGNATIUS."

TO THE EDITOR OF THE *MORNING ADVERTISER*.

"SIR,—The public for some months past have frequently been entertained with meetings and lectures upon the above subject, by an English clergyman, at which meetings the grossest and most indecent mis-statements have been listened to with avidity inside the walls of the meeting-rooms, and the most improper books sold and purchased outside these places of Protestant resort. The principal spokesman, lion, and hero has been 'Brother Stanislaus.' I am in a position to prove that this clergyman has knowingly abetted this man in publicly stating the most flagrant untruths, and countenanced other persons of a most shocking character.

"Now, sir, it is just to ourselves and to the public that I should give to your readers a letter which I received from 'Brother Stanislaus' last week, viz., on Monday week :—

"'LONDON, *March 23*.

"'FATHER,—Are you a fisherman? Are you seeking to save sinners? Supposing one, the greatest you know, were to come, would you see him? He will call to-morrow, at nine o'clock.

"'Pray Jesus for him. BROTHER STANISLAUS.'

"With this letter he enclosed to me his photograph! He did call, but I did not see him. He offered to write to the papers and publicly acknowledge the falsehoods he had told, and also re-assert his belief in the 'errors of Ritualism,' as this clergyman calls them, if only I would see him.

“He followed me down to Laleham, and from an inn in the village sent me the following:—

“‘TO THE VERY REV. FATHER IGNATIUS, O.S.B.

✠ PAX.

“‘FATHER,—I am waiting to hear from you. I have not come down with the intention of annoying you, but as I am about to leave London I wish to see you before I go. Of course you can refuse to see me, but if you knew all you would not.

“‘As to the letter which you proposed I should write, I am willing to do so. After the general invitation you gave in your sermon on Sunday night, even I have ventured to demand an interview. I understand in the village that some kind of a meeting is to be held to-morrow in opposition to you; with this I have nothing to do, therefore do not blame me. I am waiting to know whether you will see me.

STANISLAUS.’

“After this, in presence of a clergyman who was staying at the Monastery, I granted Stanislaus an interview in the Old Man’s Lodge, adjoining the chapel. He told me that he had been to Confession to a priest in London, who had refused him Absolution until he had, as far as in him lay, made restitution for the falsehoods he had told respecting us; this and anything else which I desired he was willing to do, if I would forgive him. I told him that I freely forgave him, and that I only wished that his repentance might prove sincere, which I strongly doubted; and this I told him. I reminded him of the shocking things which, to gratify the animosity of others, he had been led into saying—things which he knew were his own invention. Brother Stanislaus assented to all I said, and added that he could not expect me to believe him again, but that he did truly repent and desire to undo the evil he had done to us. He said he still loved us and our Monastery as much as ever; that he must enter some Convent or other—he could not remain in the world.

I said, 'You cannot expect us to receive you into our House again, can you?' He replied no, he could not. I then added, that if he would put himself under some priest's charge for a year, and obtain a good character from him, that then I would receive him as a penitent. He then left.

"Now, sir, this is the termination of this clergyman's anti-monastic escapade, and of 'Brother Stanislaus' startling disclosures' about us. The leaders of this movement have succeeded in worrying and persecuting us for four months and more, in almost causing the death of my youngest brother Clavering, in depriving us of our rest by night and our safety by day, in sending mobs of ignorant and infuriated people after me both here and in London, in attacking our private residence with the greatest violence, trying to prevent us from saying our prayers in our own private house, by hiring and bringing down from London brass bands to play under our chapel windows while our most solemn services were going on, etc. etc. I would ask, sir, supposing we attempted such a violent persecution against these men, should we not at once be punished? And yet they have had it all their own way, and we have to bear it all; and this is a free country, it is said! They have caused me much expense, suffering of body and mind, loss of time and health, and still they are at liberty to continue their violence, and we must bear on. Before concluding, allow me to enclose the words which another of this clergyman's hired younger dupes, who spoke against us at the Hanover Square Rooms, has just written to me:—

" 'NORWICH.

" 'MY DEAR GODFATHER,—I am very happy to think I have permission from you to write again to you, whom I truly love and respect. I am, indeed, very sorry that I ever attended any meeting against you and the Holy Catholic Faith. I only hope you will accept this (apology), and forgive and pray for me always. I have just answered Mr. H.'s letter, telling him that I shall not attend the meeting on Friday.

"I hope you will believe me when I say I am deeply, truly penitent for going to these meetings, and I am sure I have not been well since, thinking of you; it has made me quite miserable and ill. I only wish I was able to come up and speak to you myself, and tell you how sorry I am.

"I had almost accepted the money (from the Protestants) merely just to come and hear you preach in London, but then if I did I knew I must attend the meeting; so I would not do that even for the pleasure of seeing you again. Will you put the question to the Chapter when you meet next week, whether they would let me be admitted amongst them again, because I believe I should be kept a great deal better from sin if I were in the Order.

"Hoping you are quite well, believe me, your true and affectionate godson,
 GEORGE EDMUND.

"REV. FATHER IGNATIUS."

"And now, sir, may we be allowed to enjoy a little respite from Protestant cruelty and persecution; and will Mr. — attend to his parochial duties, instead of going about into other people's parishes, hounding on mobs to attack and molest us and others in the Church of England? The 'startling disclosures' against us, which this clergyman promised by the aid of false witnesses. What have they come to? I think the tables are turned, and that the 'Startling Disclosures' are against Mr. — himself and the characters of his unscrupulous associates. His witnesses own that they have told the grossest falsehoods, and that they received Protestant money to do so. Some of them state that when they had nothing to say the Protestant leaders at the meeting wrote something for them to read, as their own experiences. The commandments of God, certainly, have no weight with these people. I now leave 'my disclosures' before an impartial public, and shall be glad to know whether public opinion will sanction the continued harassing and violent persecution

to which we are subjected at the hands of the Protestant leaders I have named and their paid bullies.

"In conclusion, I would add that the accounts of the proceedings at our Chapter last week, as given in the *Rock*, are all untrue. The Host was not carried; no prayer, or anything like one, was made to the Virgin. No woman draped in black, or anything else, walked barefoot; nor was a doll carried representing the Infant Saviour. We did not 'scrupulously conceal any of our proceedings from the public eye,' as we are proud of our religion, and have nothing to conceal. We were compelled to send for a carpenter to nail up hangings round the house and chapel, as Mr. — and his companions, from London, were so violent and abusive that we required this protection. As it was, they threw mud and dung over the hedges of our garden at us. We cannot be too grateful to the police and our kind Laleham neighbours for the quiet protection they strove to afford us.—I am, sir, yours, etc.,

✠ IGNATIUS, O.S.B., Superior."

The conclusion of the foregoing letter points significantly to the mode of vendetta resorted to by the discomfited Protestants, after their retreat from the battlefield of the Hanover Square Rooms. Thwarted in their attempt to strike at the Reverend Father through the more indirect channels of implication and covert inference, they now sank to the low level of personal violence. Life at Laleham was almost an impossibility. Every Festival that evolved from the Church Calendar became a day of dread and anxiety to the Monks and their friends. Whole gangs of ruffians were sent down from London on purpose to disturb and profane the devotions of the little Priory Chapel, and on more than one occasion the police had to be lodged day and night within the Monastery and surrounding premises, in order to protect their inmates from the fury of the crowd. But even in spite of these precautions, sacrilege was committed, and most disgraceful scenes ensued. A beautiful life-sized figure of the Blessed Virgin was the victim of one

of these outrageous raids. Not content with brawling outside the chapel during Mass, and playing discordant street music at the most devotional moments of this solemn service, several attempts were made to force an entrance into the precincts of the monastic property itself. Men carrying “No Popery” written on their hats, and brandishing horrible similitudes of the Sacred Host, tied to sticks, succeeded in storming a breach in the garden hedge, and had not the grit of the Laleham constables and villagers risen valiantly to the occasion, there is no knowing to what extremities these ruffians might have pushed their violence and profanity. The Reverend Father remembers with lively gratitude, the plucky way in which the local police and neighbours charged back upon the band of rowdies, and drove them pell-mell into the high-road in full retreat. But even in spite of this gallant defence, a considerable amount of damage was done by the mob; and, amongst other aggressions, they seized and literally smashed to pieces a large image of the Madonna, which happened to be enshrined in the garden, and therefore was within easy reach of their insane fury.

It can scarcely be wondered that this unfortunate sequence of persecutions, and the anguish of spirit which they provoked, should have produced so great a strain on the Father’s physical resources, that they threatened a serious failure, which could only be met with immediate rest and change of scene.

Yielding to the entreaties of those most interested in his welfare, the Reverend Father accepted a pressing invitation from his faithful old friend, Mrs. Cameron, and shortly afterwards went to stay with her in the Parsonage House, Glen Urquhart, Lakefield being at that time let, and occupied by strangers.

A very special touch of interest haloes this Highland visit. The Monk, who was accompanied by his brother, Clavering Lyne, carried with him the Reserved Sacrament from the Laleham Tabernacle. Glen Urquhart was situated many miles from an Episcopal Church, and the Lakefield

Chapel in disuse, so he determined that, no matter what anxiety and inconvenience such a transit might entail, the Sacred Elements should be borne with him for the comfort and refreshment of his spiritually fasting friends. So to Lakefield, and to the small stone altar in the primitive Highland Church, he bore his Precious Charge, enclosed in a small oak case, made expressly for the purpose.

And every Sunday during that peaceful interlude between the hurricanes of events that encompassed him on every side, the Reverend Father communicated his friends from the Contents of this mysterious casket. Being himself still in the Diaconate, this was the only way in which he could administer, pending the presence of a celebrant who would of course possess the prerogative of Priesthood.

This short holiday was indeed a blessed respite from the weary tension of mind and body, which was so soon to be renewed and strengthened, in the mercifully hidden future.

CHAPTER XXXVI

"THE VALLEY OF THE SHADOW"

"While in this dreary world of woe,
This world devoid of peace,
O let us on Thy Breast repose,
Bid Thou our sorrows cease."

IT was a wild sky that broke over the close of the year 1868, and a darker one still which shadowed the commencement of its successor, 1869. Flashes of sun, rushes of clouds, and the final domination of the latter. Clouds everywhere, and on all sides! Clouds that held thunder, hail and tempest; clouds that very nearly broke and blotted out the sun.

Yet the glimpses of light were glorious; for they meant salvation, wholesale and individual, and in one special instance, the snatching back, under God's blessing, of a whole cluster of youthful castaways, who were fast drifting to destruction through submersion in deadly sin.

One Saturday evening during the brief breathing-time which the Reverend Father allowed himself between his duties at St. Paul's and St. Edmund's on the Fridays and Sundays of each week, a stranger presented an urgent petition at the Hunter Street Mission House. "He must see the Superior, at any price," said he, "for his errand was one of life and death," and the evident earnestness of his appeal obtained him an immediate passport into the Monk's presence. The new-comer proved to be an intelligent and gentlemanly lad of about fourteen, whose identity it was not difficult to verify. He was the friend and fellow-student of one of the Father's own relatives at a large public school, so well known that it almost heads the list of English educational

institutes. It was this very relative's influence that had sent the boy upon his present errand. "Go to Father Ignatius," had been the advice given, "and he will tell you what you are to do." So straightway, upon the spur of this good counsel, he had come with his miserable burden to the feet of the minister of God.

There was something very pitiful, and almost heroic, about the way in which his story was told. The case was one of a great fall, an overwhelming sorrow, and the inability to find a way of escape from an atmosphere made unbearable by a degradation which only silence can express. The honour of an ancient and justly esteemed public school was literally tottering before a downfall, and this poor lad—more of a victim than an aggressor—had come by night in his despair to seek a light to lighten his darkness.

It was a very difficult convergence of expedients, a most intricate overlapping of spiritual cross-roads, for even a Monk to manipulate—this exposure of the wounds and bruises on a scholastic body, deemed to be as sound as any in the land. But the Reverend Father's own personality was a rock of strength which in moments of supreme emergency seldom failed to yield inspiration—for the simple reason that he never hesitated to make a clean sweep of diplomatic modulations whensoever they threatened to spread so much as a gossamer between his own conscience and the One to Whom his life-service had been given.

In the present case he had two considerations only to weigh in the balance—the position of the unfortunate penitent, as a "sneak," and therefore a pariah in the eyes of his comrades, and the low-water ebb of morality in a crowded home of young humanity, where even Christian decency was fast drifting into a condition of polluted mud and ooze—a blot and horror in the eyes of the All-Seeing. And he did not hesitate to give God His accustomed place—the first.

I think that those who have had the privilege of obtaining Father Ignatius' advice on crucial matters, will be

unanimous in saying that they have found it to be very simple, straight across country, and so concentrated on one motive, as to be absolutely unelastic or capable of variations on the mother theme. On the occasion in point, he had to choose between two inevitable sacrifices—the probable suffering of a single individual, or the possible damnation of many. He adopted the former alternative. "Go back at once," said he to the lad, after giving him such comfort and kindly sympathy as his condition needed,— "go back to your school and tell Mr. —," naming one of the masters who was in Priest's Orders, "exactly what you have told me. God will give you the strength to do it."

This was the summary of a long talk and the gist of the direction given, "Go back and tell all," and it is with feelings of the deepest commiseration and respect that I add the sequel. This injunction was obeyed that same night, and to the letter. The boy who had hewn so heavy a cross for his own weak shoulders, had the courage to lift it boldly, and the manhood to carry it humbly up the Calvary of reparation, by a path from which many an older soldier than he, would have turned back appalled.

The result of this exposure was naturally an upheaval. At one swoop, seventeen pupils from one of the leading British Protestant schools were ignominiously expelled, nearly half of whom were sons of the Purple and Fine Linen Order, from whose distinction of blood and culture better things might have been hoped, if not expected.

One week later, the head master of this time-honoured establishment sought out the Reverend Father, and in person thanked him for his most timely and much-needed interposition. "Father Ignatius, you have saved my school!" he said with sincere emotion, and these words from such a man meant much. Unfortunately, however, the large-minded dignity of this highly placed official was not emulated, even in the echo, by all who by necessity came in contact with the circumstances of the case. Some years later, the Reverend Father had the pain of reading in the public newspaper a statement which made him burn with

indignation and long to fly in person to the vindication of the arraigned.

A vendetta, probably planned by some one among those who owed him their former expulsion, had evidently been put into practice against the unfortunate lad. For lack of opportunity, the swords of retaliation were fain to keep their scabbards until such time as chance might point the moment for assault, and at last that moment had come. With the young man's subsequent push for postulancy to public Office, the whole story was raked up by anonymous voices, and in such a manner that, by covert inference, the very one by whose individual courage a great national erection had been saved from earthquake, was placed in an ambiguous position which suggested what was absolutely untrue, and effectually pulverised his career.

So much for the justice of this little world. But thanks be to God, there will be a Day when men will be judged by their own hearts rather than their slanderers' tongues—a Day when many a sordid vengeance will be turned back into its own bosom, with the thrust of a flaming sword.

This sad incident lingered long and painfully in the Reverend Father's mind; but as the spiritual confidant, his hands were bound, and he could do nothing.

At the fall of this same year (1868) occurred one of the most notorious events with which the name of Father Ignatius must for ever be associated in the public mind—the riots at St. Edmund's, Lombard Street. I have had the advantage of gathering up the personal recollections of more than one eye-witness actually present on these extraordinary occasions, and preposterous as they may seem, I can reassure the reader that no details herein related, are exaggerated or permitted to overstep the border of carefully authenticated truth.

Of the exact cause of this formidable demonstration it is difficult to unearth the root, but inasmuch as a busy sale of the Monk's portrait, together with offensive leaflets, formed a leading feature of the proceedings, it is not uncharitable to surmise that the whole affair was an elaborate

supplement to the fiasco of Hanover Square. That the merchants of Lombard Street themselves should have condescended to the cowardice of attacking a defenceless man, and insulting English ladies or venerable members of the clergy who happened to be at their mercy, is an inference which I should be ashamed to pen. In the cause of logic and patriotism, I hasten to label this aggression as a mere spasm of effervescence on the part of an ignorant crowd. Were it otherwise, I should "blush aloud" to belong to a country whose chivalrous large-mindedness has ever been a byword and an example to the European world.

For three successive Friday noons this storm passed over the City of London. First of all the rising of the gale, then the outpouring of its pent-up fury, and last of all, the lull into the distance, and the breaking forth of the May-day sun.

These Friday services were arranged on purpose for busy men, and consisted of just three-quarters of an hour's plain speaking on subjects necessary to salvation. The congregations were typical of the locality, and knowing this, it was the preacher's duty to tune his discourses into a somewhat topical key—a necessity which perhaps gave rise to the report that Father Ignatius had attacked the commercial Englishman. This assertion, although true in the abstract sense, was void so far as its personal application was concerned. The Monk warned, encouraged, or appealed to the representative British merchant in his multiplex incarnation of honest negotiator, rogue, thief, or idler, but only as the type, not the individual. It was his object to purge Lombard Street of its undercurrents of money worship and sordidity, and this asperges was very nearly performed with the drops of his own blood. The ill-gotten gold literally rattled in unscrupulous pockets, and the defrauders of the widows and fatherless sweated with the nightmare, "Thou art the man." Yet, all the same, they returned and listened, fitted the caps to their own hard heads, and cursed in their hearts the strange black-habited teller of these bitter home truths.

But for all that, it was not "the blind man of Lombard Street" who stood at the door of St. Edmund's, thirsting for the Monk's life, laying violent hands on the aged and infirm, and outraging womanly sensibility with the uttering of foul words. English kings of commerce could not have stooped so low!

As a precursor of the gathering storm, an attempt was one day made to stab the Reverend Father as he left the pulpit. A man rushed forward with an open knife, and but for the presence of mind of a bystander (the Monk's brother, Clavering Lyne), he would most certainly have dealt the preacher a deadly blow. The assailant proved to be a penniless vagabond who had been charitably sheltered and fed for weeks at the Laleham Monastery, but who, for reasons too long to enter into, had been found utterly unworthy of the privilege.

This cowardly attack was but the foreword to a whole volume of sensational melodrama. The summit of the climax was only reached, when on the eventful Friday mid-day, the sermon which has become an historical memory, was preached to the City magnates, and produced a spectacle which never before or afterwards has been recorded in the Metropolitan Chronicles. The Monk Ignatius was announced to address "the blind man of Lombard Street" in St. Edmund's Church, the Merchants' Temple, and at the news two sleeping lions awoke—the Dives of Commerce, who knew that a mighty search-light was about to fall upon his dark doings, and the Polemic Rampant, the baffled enemy who scented an occasion to draw blood.

Father Ignatius himself was totally unprepared for the effect which his advertisement was to produce. As a Missioner, he had chosen his subject with premeditation and purpose, but with no intention of providing a page in history, or adding his own name to the index of the Martyrology. No one eyed with more stupefaction than himself, the remarkable panorama which the City centres presented that early autumn noonday, when with military punctuality he arrived upon the scene, and was met by a

dense concourse of humanity, swarming like flies on sugar, black, buzzing, and doggedly intent—just a picture that might have recalled the streets of Paris under the tricolour of Robespierre, or a glimpse of the Florentine Piazza where Savonarola piled his Bonfire of Vanities.

It was a crowd before whose breath all authority was tossed here and there like a helpless feather, and its ring-leaders had called the muster for a purpose. No attempt was made to prevent the Reverend Father from entering the church. By a preconcerted plan, the mob stood aside like the waters of the Red Sea, but when once he had passed, it closed in behind him, a dead wall of relentless enmity, and thus shut him out from all possibility of return or escape.

Contemporary statistics estimate that extraordinary gathering at over 60,000 strong. The traffic of vehicles had ceased long before the hour announced for service, and every moment it seemed that fresh relays of foot-passengers arrived to make the crush still more dangerous in the direction of the church itself, where the constables were vainly trying to keep some show of order both inside and at the door of the congested building. The *coup d'œil* was unique!

Lombard Street itself was one swaying, heaving black body. Business was in a hopeless condition at the Banks. The crowd had taken supreme possession of the whole neighbourhood. Like a huge palpitating serpent, it lay coiled and creeping, as far as eye could reach. Every inch of space between the Mansion House and Lombard Street was packed to suffocation, every railing and doorstep obliterated with human parasites. Right into Gracechurch Street the block extended, and for the time being, the very breath of Commerce and Locomotion seemed suspended, before the rush and crush of that whirlwind of a multitude.

If the mob had been composed of the typical British sight-seer, its dispersion might have been possible, but against the paid rowdy, the exhortations of the police were powerless. Reinforcements were rapidly despatched from other districts, but to no purpose. Scuffles and stampedes

took place on every hand, and the danger grew more formidable every moment. A Jewish author describing the scene within the church, speaks of it in terms only applicable to a Bedlam in revolt. Constables were stationed in the aisles to keep the peace (or its semblance), and it was as much as they could do, to hold the doors against the violence of the solid battering-ram of humanity which swept up to them with the force and persistency of an angry sea.

Things were desperate enough during the hours which preceded the service, and the forty-five minutes that covered the actual delivery of the Monk's address; but the high tide of fury was reserved for the moment when the congregation should leave the church, and the preacher himself be forced to taste the mercy of the crowd. He was in a death-trap, and his enemies knew it, so they waited patiently enough until the opening of the doors should deliver their prey into their hands.

Father Ignatius has a natural power of commanding attention, and on this occasion he gave his Message to the Merchant Princes in a silence which was only rippled by the distant murmur of those without the doors, and one or two uneasy movements from sufferers who from want of space or air strove to alleviate their feelings by a subdued fidget. The sermon itself is too well known to need analysis. It was a superb appeal to the Israel of the City wilderness, that they should exchange their worship of the Golden Calf for the glory of the Lord of Hosts, and by so doing, not only *realise*, but *justify* the potentiality of their position as the purse-strings of a great Christian country.

At the close of the sermon an indescribable confusion ensued. There was chaos within and without. Eight sturdy policemen pounced upon the Reverend Father, and despite his expostulations, hurried him into the vestry, while they stood in a body at the door. "Very sorry, sir," said one of them, when this was done, "but we're only doing our duty. We've been told to guard your life." And for four mortal hours their prisoner was fain to remain quiescent,

till at length, losing patience, he broke away from his defenders, and resolved to take the odds of a temerity which might justly be called insane.

Meanwhile, the excitement in the body of the church had reached white heat. It was impossible to empty the nave of its congregation. The roughs at the door interrupted the exodus in the most disgraceful manner. Ladies were greeted with the grossest of insults, and peace-seeking individuals who had come to hear the Gospel were subjected to actual violence at the hands of these hirelings. The author whom I have before referred to, was not only a witness, but an actor in these extraordinary proceedings. Having deposited with his own fingers one of the ring-leaders in a mud cart (which happened to be "blocked," till further notice, near the church door), his thoughts turned to the helpless man who sooner or later would be obliged to leave his "sanctuary" and face the music of the howling mob. "Take my arm, Father Ignatius," he said courteously, after forcing his way to the Monk's side, "and I will do my best to get you out." This kindly offer was supplemented by another from the Bank managers. They offered to "rush" the Reverend Father by back entrances into their own buildings, and through these into Cornhill, but he received both suggestions with the same answer: "No, thank you; being an Englishman, I could not possibly run away, or escape by a back door. Besides which, I know that Our Lord will give me a guard of angels, and you will see, when I go out into the crowd, that no one will be permitted to do me harm."

So he stayed quietly in the old sacristy, while a few yards away, the police contested his life with those who strove to force an entrance and wreak their vengeance on a defenceless victim, whose supposed offence many had not even troubled to inquire into. The constabulary felt its impotency to restore order, and the rioters felt it too. Cries of "Turn on the main" (a witticism composed at the expense of Sir Richard Mayne, who then commanded the London Police Force) arose on all sides, and was doubtless provoked

by the rumour that the assistance of the Horse Constabulary had already been invoked. These shouts were the signal for renewed confusion and panic. The house of God presented the lamentable spectacle of a disgraceful bear-garden, and matters were within a hair's breadth of a life-and-death issue, when the final touch was given to the crisis, by the arrival of an Inspector on horseback, heading a formidable squadron of sturdy civic cavalry.

In an instant, the situation was reversed. Charging the mob on every side, the mounted police soon cleared a passage of escape for those within the church, and one by one the terrified congregation were able to file out, amid a volley of threats and blasphemy from the rioters now held at bay.

But even this powerful intervention was unable to disperse the seething thousands—it only controlled them. They waited hour after hour for the coming of the Monk, and to see if the enemy's forecast would be fulfilled—that he would be torn in pieces, as soon as he set foot within the street. And this was the precise condition of events when four o'clock struck, and the Reverend Father, turning to his faithful policemen, announced his determination of returning to Hunter Street. "I can wait no longer," he said firmly. "I have to preach again this evening at St. Paul's, Bunhill Row, and must rest and dine first. Crowd or no crowd, I shall go now, so kindly try and get me to my cab."

There was no persuading him to alter his mind, so with some difficulty, the cab which had been hopelessly hemmed in by the crowd five hours or more, was discovered, and threaded through the human avenues to the door of St. Edmund's—a movement which caused a delirious thrill of expectation to sweep through the huge assembly. In another instant, the object of all this turmoil, this demonstration of what is most despicable in man—the counterfeit of the Divine Image—stood alone in the teeth of his pursuers, a slight and solitary figure, which the afternoon sun just touched sufficiently to emphasise its outlines to

the many thousand eyes that were peering, glaring, and blinking on it, from every square inch within focus.

Those who saw it, say they will never forget the effect produced by the appearance of the Monk on the threshold of St. Edmund's Church. The sight of this one unarmed man, standing nodding and laughing in their midst, proved to be a far mightier passport to his safety, than all the police escorts of combined Europe could possibly have afforded. The revulsion was psychological. Father Ignatius was at the mercy of the mob, at the odds of one against many, and he met the emergency with a nod and a laugh. The bodyguard of angels must indeed have been present, for the people answered his greeting with a burst of applause. Cheer upon cheer arose far and near, and it was not until he was safely installed in his cab, and about to drive away, that a few malcontents remembered that they were letting their prey slip through the wires. Then, and then only, did a feeble countershock make itself felt. Some rowdies surrounded the cab and tried to overturn it, but the immortal British Bobby was on the alert, and the attempt was frustrated. Only one other aggression closed this exciting episode. A man caught up a large flint from the road (which was in process of mending), and, coming deliberately within a few yards of the cab window, he threw it with great force in the Monk's face.

"But here," says Father Ignatius, when recounting the occurrence, "one of the real miracles of my life must be recorded. That stone never struck me! I saw it thrown, but as it reached me, it was literally caught midway in the air by an unseen hand, and deposited very gently at my feet, as I sat in the cab."

This was the last hostile move of the checkmated mob. Lombard Street was speedily deserted, and its church restored to order. The latter presented a truly strange appearance after its transformation into a gladiatorial amphitheatre. The signs of the struggle were almost ludicrously apparent. Not only were portions and "various" of ladies' apparel plentifully strewn about, but also relics of less fragile attire.

Scraps of men's coats, trampled hats, neckties, and proprietary sundries, were leading features of the débris.

As for the Reverend Father, he reached the Mission House without adventure, where he found his mother awaiting him in a state of anxious terror which it is not difficult to realise. That same night he revisited the City and preached in St. Paul's Church, to a very large but sympathetic congregation. This sermon closed the index of one of the most exhausting and exciting days which it can ever have been the lot of mortal to survive.

It is interesting to add that on the following Friday, Father Ignatius resumed his cudgels at St. Edmund's, but henceforth as master of the situation. There was a slight show of contumacious presences on this occasion, but it was the last flicker of a quenched fire, and the Monk stepped out boldly among the City souls. In some respects he may almost be said to have manipulated them with a super-high hand. For instance, it had been reported to him that certain of the magnates in his commercial congregation had expressed discontent, because an officially audited balance sheet was not presented periodically, setting forth the expenditures which were the result of the funds collected at these particular services for the support of the monastic work.

In the course of his next sermon, the Monk turned this innuendo inside out. It had come to his knowledge, he said, that some of those present would prefer having an account rendered as to the way in which their offerings were spent, and he wished to answer their inference. He had never yet dealt in balance sheets, and had no intention of doing so then. The little money that was given at these services—usually from £4 to £7—he should continue to spend exactly as he deemed best, and he wished his hearers to make a thorough digestion of the fact. Those who trusted him would not give less generously for this knowledge, and as to the others, they had the easy alternative of refraining from giving at all.

It was kill or cure language, but it went home. That

day the offertory amounted to £75—a maximum which had never yet been approached in that church.

As a bright and peaceful contrast to these stormy City annals, the Reverend Father must derive sincere pleasure in remembering the unanimous and almost frantic ovation which greeted him twenty-five years later, when returning to this same church (April 26, 1893), and preaching to these same listeners the identical truths of the unchangeable Christian Faith. How black the horizon in the memorable 1868, how bright and serene when the century drew nearer its close!

Yet he had not altered. It was not the Monk that had changed, but only Time, who in his whimsical evolutions, had set his big wheel turning to a gentler and wiser tune.

CHAPTER XXXVII

"THE TONGUE IS A FIRE"

"Jesus ! oh, my Jesus !
Can I ever tell
Half the Love that saved me
From the pains of Hell !"

THE next arrow that was to strike the Monk's career was destined to be aimed by the mischievous tongue of a woman, and that woman the first Prioress of his Third Order Sisterhood, located at the Mission House, 51 Hunter Street. It is an unpleasant task to track disaster to the door of one who for many months previous to her apostasy had proved herself a zealous benefactress of the very cause which she subsequently sought to ruin, but the fact is too important to be ignored.

Sister Gertrude was installed in Hunter Street as lay Prioress of the Benedictine Tertiaries, and it was mainly by her personal efforts and contributions that the purse-strings of this working centre were kept free of knots. She was a most successful solicitor both of funds and sympathy, and altogether the position which she held with regard to the Superior and his congregation was one of entire confidence and responsibility. But unfortunately for all concerned, the femininity of Sister Gertrude was of the kind that out-steps discretion, and even in the golden days of her really generous services, it showed premonitory symptoms of becoming acute and aggressive. Not that the Reverend Father had ever anticipated the climax that was eventually to sever her connection with the Order, but he had already had more than one introspective glimpse which suggested a possibility of complications. For instance, this enthusiastic

lady evinced distress, when the Superior poured the waters of dilution upon her desire to take life-vows as a mere Tertiary and semi-secular; and still more, when he refused to bless the wedding-ring which she announced her intention of wearing as a seal of consecration. It was in vain that he reminded her of the "gulf stream" lying between the cloistered nun and the Christian lay-helper, and demonstrated the hopeless incongruity of straining to bridge over the unbridgable—she was not to be convinced, and the germ of friction arose from that moment.

So long as this troublesome element remained in course of incubation, its dangers were relative, but no sooner had the chrysalis become a moth, than it was necessary to clip its wings. Sister Gertrude had recourse to the commonest weapon extant in woman's armoury—her tongue—and this member being both profuse and unruly, the result was found to be coincidental with the exit of the Prioress from the Third Order congregation.

War was declared upon the basis of certain letters received by the Monk from several trusted members of the Hunter Street Community. The Prioress had permitted herself to speak of him in terms which gave scandal to the Order, and as its Superior, he was bound to investigate the offence. The outcome of this inquisition was neither favourable to the lady nor without significance to his own monastic personality, and on the strength of this deduction it was necessary to act without delay. Father Ignatius felt it to be his duty to demand the resignation of one who was evidently unfitted to fill so important a position, and for this purpose he acquainted Sister Gertrude with his intention, explaining to her his reason for arriving at so summary a conclusion.

The Prioress refused to budge. The Superior sought to remind her that her most dignified and simple course would be to accept his offer of the initiative and walk gracefully out; but she stood doggedly firm, and at the close of some very elaborate and painful negotiations, he was

at last forced to tell her that he saw no alternative but to excommunicate her from the Order.

This ultimatum however, proved fruitless, and after giving both time and opportunity every facility for expansion which Christian chivalry could devise, the day dawned when this stubborn lady received her formal notice to quit, in the shape of a written excommunication from the Anglo-Benedictine Order.

Sixteen years of inhibition from the London Diocese was the reward reaped by the Reverend Father for the exercise of a self-defensive and monastic prerogative, misrepresented and garnished into a clumsy act of ecclesiastical smuggling by the insidious inventions of a lying tongue.

Sister Gertrude carried her grievance to the ear of the Bishop of London—"She had been ignominiously excommunicated," said she, "from *the Church of England* by Father Ignatius, who was a Deacon, and therefore canonically unfitted to administer such a punishment." The plaintiff's statement was supported by the confirmation of an accompanying relative (likewise a female), and between them they aroused the astonished Bishop to a state of official exasperation hardly to be wondered at, considering the barefaced presumption of the alleged step, and the fact that the accused was no other than the notorious Monk who was already so sharp and unrootable a thorn in the side of the Purple Robe.

Dr. Tait formulated his protest in a public letter to the *Times* and other leading dailies, setting forth the preposterous absurdity of an English Deacon pretending to administer the extreme limits of prelatial prerogative, and emphasising in no measured terms his own denunciation of the same. This drastic measure was followed by another—an official intimation to the Monk himself, that his services at St. Edmund's, Lombard Street, and St. Paul's, Bunhill Row, must be forthwith suspended, pending further notification.

It can hardly be said that the Bishop's personal attitude towards the Reverend Father was an unkind one. He was

labouring under a vivid and irritating misapprehension, and he naturally resented the violation of his Episcopal corns by the pressure of a Deacon's boot. The Father, on his side, made haste to furnish his lordship with a true statement of the case, and a summary of his grievances against a lady whom he had been forced to excommunicate from his own Order, but had never dreamed of attempting to expel from the altars of the representative National Church. But Dr. Tait's mind was evidently little tuned to monasticism. On December 8th he received the Monk in private audience at Fulham Palace, and discussed the matter with him, in a strain which led his visitor to conclude that the chief point at issue was not so much the setting straight of a canonical misunderstanding, as an opportunity, on the Bishop's side, for exacting concessions which no convinced religious could justly entertain. The Prelate argued against an attitude which was to his way of thinking, incompatible with the spirit of Reformationary principles, but to these exhortations the Reverend Father presented a very simple defence—his vows—the promise which from early youth he had made to God, to live for "Jesus only" in the isolation and sacrifice of the Monk's life. Dr. Tait's rejoinder was an offer to absolve him from such vows—a climax which caused the temperature on either side to register a rise. "My lord," said the Father warmly, "what you ask of me is tantamount to asking me to go to Hell!" The Bishop's reply was a characteristic one—"Then really, Mr. Lyne, I don't see what more I can say upon the subject;" and with that, the interview ended.

There were many notable men at this moment who interested themselves on the Monk's behalf, and amongst them Mr. Gladstone, one of the Reverend Father's most appreciative of listeners, and a faithful supporter, who followed him openly from Church to Hall. "Do all you can to submit to the Bishop short of violating an enlightened conscience." This was the gist of the great statesman's counsel, when asked by the Monk for his advice; but later on he approached Dr. Tait personally

upon the subject, and obtained a recall of the suspension on his friend's behalf. The Rev. Pascoe Grenfell Hill (Rector of St. Edmund's) was another sincere Christian who was deeply grieved by the severe and unjustified austerity of the Bishop's measures. He accompanied the Reverend Father to Fulham Palace, and at the close of the interview was called aside by Dr. Tait, who, after expressing his regret at not being able to permit the services at St. Edmund's to continue, concluded his remarks with these contradictory words: "Remember, Mr. Hill, I do not inhibit Mr. Lyne, and I should be very sorry indeed to do so."

Events evolved rapidly. Father Ignatius shifted his Sunday evening services to the Store Street Music Hall, which was packed to overflowing; and Dr. Tait was translated to the Archbishopric of Canterbury. On the occasion of his accession, he wrote to the Reverend Father, giving him a very courteous permission to occupy any pulpit within his jurisdiction—a gracious act of reparation, which unfortunately was powerless to efface its forerunner, the order of suspension in his Metropolitan diocese.

The See of London was transferred to Dr. Jackson—an election scarcely calculated to advance the interests of a leader of monasticism. No sooner was the new Bishop installed, than he was approached from influential quarters on the subject of the Monk's restoration to the diocesan pulpits. Much pressure was brought to bear upon these appeals, and the case was represented in its true colours by those whose integrity and disinterested sense of justice admitted of no question. Yet in spite of this powerful advocacy, and in the very face of the Reverend Father's own personal application for redress and restitution, Dr. Jackson chose to maintain a negative but equally prohibitive position by refusing to interfere. "He saw no reason," said his lordship, "to deviate from the line set down by his predecessor;" and from this inadequate standpoint he declined to budge an inch. It is impossible to fathom the motive of this blind obstinacy, or perhaps I

should be nearer the truth if I substituted the word "undesirable" for the more sweeping expression that implies inability. Dr. Jackson knew perfectly well (for the letters were placed at his disposal) that his predecessor's ban had been publicly lifted one month after it had first been proclaimed, but the document of reparation coming from Canterbury instead of London, its effect was void in the latter diocese, unless confirmed by the local Bishop—a natural sequence, depending solely on a scrap of Purple Tape.

And it was just this trifling ratification which Dr. Jackson chose to withhold, thinking thereby to silence a troublesome voice and bind the hands of an unmanageable problem. He was strangely mistaken in both these flourishes of ecclesiastical diplomacy. Father Ignatius filled his own halls, and emptied the churches. It is always a risk to make a martyr of a public personality, and this homely little lesson Dr. Jackson was fain to realise when too late to climb down from his stilts. For sixteen years—in fact, until another reigned at Fulham Palace—the Reverend Father was banished from the London pulpits, and forced to pitch his tent in any hall that happened to be empty, during the succession of Mission circuits which even at that early period occupied many weeks in the year. From a pecuniary point of view, this transition from pulpit to platform was a distinct advantage to the monastic cause. The seats were paid for, and crowded, and there was a mighty rally among the Monk's friends which seemed to rouse a reflex enthusiasm on the side of the general public. But, on the other hand, the Reverend Father's susceptibility suffered keenly from the Bishop's strange and unkind procedure, and his own inability to obtain the unqualified redress which he knew to be his due. A public appeal to the Bishop, which the Father published, set forth in full his plea for toleration, but it elicited no response.

It must be difficult for Father Ignatius, even after this long lapse of years, to deal leniently among his penitents

with the sin of the lying tongue. His own sufferings from that particular species of attack have been too poignant and too deadly, for him ever entirely to overcome an ingrained horror of the serpent of slander.

But if Sister Gertrude succeeded in thrusting her victim under fire of the Episcopal artillery, the sequel of the story points to the inference that the Majesty of Canterbury did not escape unscathed from the machinations of her plausible but unruly member. For the reader's sake, I deplore the impossibility of transmitting facial variations to letterpress. Were this not so, I should have the pleasure of "graphaphoning" the Monk's carefully repressed twinkle, as he gave me the *Finis* to this otherwise tragic interlude.

Owing to the introductory stepping-stones presented by her rupture with the Superior of the Order, this ex-Prioress of the Benedictine Tertiaries not only made a conquest of the arch-Episcopal ear, but likewise of the heart of an octogenarian member of the same estimable family, whom she subsequently led in triumph to the altar. Whether or not the Primate relished this unlooked-for epilogue to his exposition of bishop-errantry, the Cervantes of the times is silent.

It has been the fate of the Monk of Llanthony—from one end of his career to the other—to alternate his abiding city between the frying-pan and the fire. No sooner had the blaze of one event smouldered, than the flare of another arose, and the entire burden of this ceaseless evolution of unrest and anguish was eating all the while like an ill-fitting yoke into frail weary shoulders that were never built to carry such a load.

The year 1869 was not two months old, before an earthquake came to scare the lull which had succeeded the storm provoked by the circumstances above recorded. The Reverend Father was at that moment staying at Margate in his rôle of Missioner, and his mother was with him, both breathing freely in one of those rare *entre-actes* of peace and happiness which such companionship must suggest.

The two were enjoying a quiet walk together, when the Monk's eye fell on a placard purporting to index the contents of a daily paper, and on which he saw his own name blazoned in an association that filled his very soul with nausea and indignation.

It was another blow from the polemical battle-axe, and this time a two-handed force had been employed to strike deep. No elaboration or strategy of the pen can cloak the abominable inferences connected with this new onslaught. The name of Father Ignatius, and an accusation which is indescribably horrible, were publicly linked together on the hoardings of Police Court "sensations." If the shock of such a disclosure must have well-nigh petrified the man thus pitilessly pilloried as a scapegoat to be stoned and scourged by every missile that degraded imagination could invent, what must have been the feelings of the woman at his side—the gentle mother to whom this son was the embodiment of spiritual light and life? The reflection is beyond words.

In the Marylebone Police Court, said the reporter of the day (the 18th of February 1869), two men had been summoned, on a charge of drunkenness and disorder in the public street. These men were Brother Stanislaus, the renegade of Norwich and Hanover Square Rooms, and Brother Osmund, the unhappy boy-member of St. William's Guild, who after the expulsion of Stanislaus from Elm Hill Priory, was induced to leave his home and join this miserable incarnation, in his life of vagabondage and vice. It was the younger of the two delinquents who constituted himself spokesman before the magistrate. In the course of a long and rambling summary of his antecedents and those of his companion, Brother Osmund is reported to have made a statement, upon the strength of which, an almighty roar of protest and accusation went out broadcast, against a man who in his double capacity of Monk and clergyman, was either worthy of public exoneration before God and his fellows, or public execution at the common hangman's hands.

The indictment was a terrible one—almost too monstrous to be touched by a woman's pen. By Brother Osmund's statement, the magistrate gathered that both he and Stanislaus had lived some six years back at the Norwich Monastery, the elder as a Monk, who was in charge of St. William's Guild, of which the younger had been a prominent member. During this period the lives of these two unfortunates, instead of being holy and circumspect, had been mutually such as Christian delicacy is powerless to interpret. And here occurred the personal implication. Brother Osmund was reported to have affirmed that not only had the Superior been aware of their degeneracy, but that he had condoned and encouraged it, by performing on their behalf, and in his own church, a ceremony which in itself was blasphemy and sacrilege of the most revolting kind.

This was the digest of the accusation, and it needed no more to set the Protestant world ablaze with joy and expectation. The downfall of their enemy was now imminent—at least so they imagined—and their time had come to tread him in the dust. To hasten this pulverisation, an explicit and unclean leaflet, entitled *The Results of Monasticism*, was hurried into print, and disseminated throughout the country, by an Association purporting to be the propaganda of a pure and undefiled religion. Thousands upon thousands of this filthy rag were scattered among the classes and ages of society most prone to absorb impression, or plunge blindly into unfathomed depths of thought. Representative England, and even its railers against Monks and Popery, knew the Reverend Father too well to be swayed in their regard for the personality of the cruelly slandered Benedictine; but it was on the ignorant minority, the bigoted natives of the byways and hedges of life, that the sparks fell and detonated. For the Monk, it was a case of looking ruin full in the face, if not of actually feeling the weight of the relentless iron hand, and Father Ignatius knew himself to be walking like Peter on the waste of waters, with only the Hand of Jesus intervening between

himself and the overwhelming waves. Englishmen will not need a dissertation on the horror which must have swept this sorely tried soul, on once more finding himself held up to public detestation and for so foul a cause. Just one little touch of fellow-feeling, or a momentary self-substitution on a similar rack, will give a realistic appreciation far more vivid than the most brilliantly suggestive paragraph which the abstract pen could achieve.

It is my earnest wish to penetrate as little as possible into these dark shadows. I shall therefore eliminate from this phase of my work every sidelight that does not cast direct illumination upon the biographical process. There are nevertheless several explanations which it will be necessary to make, in order to acquaint the reader with the far-reaching consequences of this barefaced calumny, and the unsatisfactory vagueness which still attaches itself to all researches made as to its authentic cause and the source of its instigation. It is easier to surmise than define the precise share of responsibility which may be accredited to the "Polemics" as primary agents of an evidently carefully prepared ambush. Of Stanislaus and Osmund themselves there is little to say in the personal sense, except that the former was an unmitigated renegade, and the latter in all probability the victim of a moral contagion which wrecked his entire being into a chronic condition of misery and sin. In the Norwich Monastery he had been known only as a somewhat precocious and self-assertive lad, but beyond these tendencies he had evinced nothing requiring special discipline or vigilance. In the Reverend Father's opinion, had it not been for the disastrous influence by which he must have become literally *obsessed*, there is no reason why Brother Osmund should not have developed into a good Christian and a useful British citizen. It is far more in sorrow than anger, that the Superior memorises his youthful prodigal.

But before following further in the shadow cast upon the Monk's career, by his indirect association with this deplorable pair, I am anxious to quote his own words on

the subject, as an indication of the peculiar light in which he views human disasters of this description, and their affinity with certain popular schools of thought, whose expressions, transmitted chiefly by literary revival, are so recklessly allowed to saturate every phase of modern educational life. The following are Father Ignatius' original notes on the horrible episode of the Marylebone Police Court, where his name was invoked to pillar up and give realistic plausibility to an otherwise intangible chaos of unclean suggestion.

"Whatever misdemeanours," says our Reverend Father, "the younger of the two persons alluded to may have been guilty of, he was as much to be pitied as blamed. Had it not been for Mr. Chambers of Soho (quite unwittingly, of course) recommending the man Stanislaus to us at Norwich as an excellent and deserving person, and the boy (Brother Osmund), who was then only thirteen years of age, being thereupon placed blindly under his evil influence, I believe the latter would never have fallen into the shame and trouble of his after life. I know practically little of poor Brother Osmund's career except by report, as I have never read the accounts in the Press of the trials he has been the cause of. I have, however, been told enough to make me wonder at the severity meted out to him, when evils of the same kind are condoned and hushed up, where the parties known to be guilty are wealthy, or possessed of handles to their names; *vide* the wholesale Norfolk scandal of recent date, already mentioned in Chapter XXV. of this volume.

"If Brother Osmund was really as bad as he has been represented, how then is it that the late Dr. Jowett of Baliol, Oxford, and his admiring friend Dean Fremantle, should have been allowed to go 'scot free' in their applause of Plato and the translation (by Jowett) of his *Dialogues*? Jowett said his happiest hours had been spent in translating Plato's abominations for the benefit of the people of England. In this book of Jowett's—to be had at any library I believe—sins of the kind alluded to in this

chapter are held up, not as crimes, but as ideals to be admired and emulated by the youth-student of the day.

"Why was not the Master of Balliol, why are not the present disseminators of this Platonistic Civilisation, rendered liable to the Inquisition of the Penal British Law? I cannot understand why the sauce measured out for the poor uneducated goose should not be served in equal proportions for the literary and academical gander. God is just, and His true servants must love justice.

"Dean Fremantle and his party are taking away Christ, the Bible, and the Creeds of the Church from the people of England—the sole foundations of our Christian Moral Code. 'They are bringing us back to where Plato was,' Bishop Gore once said, 'and to the manners and customs of Greek Philosophy.'

"If this be so, Lord Jesus help us!"

A very short commentary will suffice to complete the forging of this unlovely and heavy chain of circumstances. The Reverend Father's interpolation alone gives illimitable scope for reflection, and it only remains for me to supplement it with a question that has long since become a problematical one. *Who* was the real instigator of the Police Court disclosure, and was this disclosure actually made by Brother Osmund, who at repeated intervals has indignantly denied that such a statement ever passed his lips?

The Protestant attitude towards this unfortunate man was almost as remarkable as the variations of his own chequered career. First of all, the polemical army bore down upon him because he was a degenerate, *and* a Monastery boy; then upon his secession to the Roman Communion, it withdrew from him altogether. But finally, when a few years later still, he earned the cold shoulder from Rome, and "rushed" himself into the very core of Protestantism as a public lecturer against the errors of Popery and its twin sister Ritualism, the engines were reversed, and the young Apostle of regeneration was

regaled with the fatted calf. Unfortunately, his antecedents were too well known for the land to flow long with milk and honey. His lectures became subjects of comment and personal criticism, and his Roman friends felt it to be their duty to enlighten their post-Reformation brothers as to the real cause of the notorious Osmund's flight from their fold. This challenge provoked another from the Protestant side, and in a short time a regular court-martial ensued. Amongst other stones cast at the accused, was the Marylebone Police Court story, and the self-evident aspersions which it implied on the lecturer's own moral character.

A noted Dundee lawyer undertook, on the Protestants' behalf, to sift this much disputed inference to its dregs, and in this intention he wrote to the Reverend Father, asking for any information which he could afford him, and receiving an answer couched in much the same terms as the first paragraph of the Monk of Llanthony's own contribution to this chapter.

It is unnecessary to weary the reader with the details of this elaborate inquiry. Only two are necessary to this biography—the fact that both in a letter from this lawyer and one also from Brother Osmund, a distinct denial of the monstrous statement said to have been made to the Police Court magistrate is emphatically set forth. The lawyer adds to this, the startling announcement that he himself had examined the archives of the Court (at the date of the trial), but had found no trace of the reported slander—an example of venomous invention which he had no hesitation in ascribing to “an ultra-Protestant gentleman” whose name he did not divulge.

As an example of the Christian treatment which the Reverend Father has enjoyed at the hands of pugilistic Protestantism, I cannot refrain from quoting the following gem. Desirous for his own sake as well as for the cause of justice to aid the work of investigation to the utmost of his power, the Monk wrote to the Association who published the leaflet on Monasticism which had raised such an outcry in the world, asking that a copy for purposes of reference

might be sent him. For all reply, the secretary penned him an open postcard, stating that the tract was out of print, but giving its full title and summary of contents in a manner which could not fail to attract the eye of any one into whose hands the card might happen to fall. Such an insult full in the face of his own Monks, and the rustic intermediaries of a village post-office, was a cruel injury from which the Reverend Father suffered with an intensity that was aggravated by the reflection that he owed the blow to an official scribe of professing Christianity.

It was an attack also which precluded retaliation except of the most negative kind, and although friends and family *en masse* started up anew on the defensive, the enemy had planned his tactics too warily to have overstepped legal security, and the only redress within reach, was that of a dignified contempt—silence.

The Protestant party had good reason to flavour their rancour with discretion. In 1869, the President of the Evangelical Mission saw fit to placard the hoardings of Folkestone and Dover with defamatory posters based upon the hideous slanders said to have emanated from the Marylebone Police Court. This complimentary tribute was offered simultaneously with the Monk's own advertisements, announcing his Missions in the Name of Jesus Only, in the self-same towns. The aggression roused the lion of Mr. Lyne senior, who, with his family, was staying in Folkestone at the time, to the fever of open warfare; and he rushed to his son's assistance with the sweep of a moral whirlwind. A prosecution for libel was quickly set on foot, but it never lived to complete even its preliminary stages.

Like Dagon of old, the mighty President came down from his pedestal at the shortest possible notice. By an ample and abject apology published in the *Times* and leading local newspapers, he elected to avail himself of an humiliating alternative, which at any rate seemed preferable in his eyes to the penalty of heavy damages incurred in the open Court. The following reprint of this public *amende*

honorable will testify to the depth and breadth of the uncompromising conditions under which it was exacted and accepted :—

“ PROTESTANT SLANDERS.

“ The following letter has been published :—‘ To the Reverend Joseph Leycester Lyne, from Lieut. - Colonel Brockman, President of the Evangelical Mission and Electoral Union. Reverend Sir,—An action having been commenced against me by you in respect of certain placards and hand-bills posted and distributed by me in the towns of Dover and Folkestone, on the occasion of certain lectures delivered by Mr. George Mackey in those towns, in the month of October last, and at which I presided as Chairman, I beg leave to express my deep and unfeigned regret that such placards and bills should have contained anything of a libellous character, or at all reflecting injuriously upon you personally, which I admit to be unjustifiable, and I therefore offer my sincere apology to you for the same. Upon your accepting this apology, which I intend to be as ample as possible, and staying the action which you have commenced against me, I will at once pay all costs and expenses to which you have been put by reason of the publication of the above-mentioned placards and hand-bills. You are at perfect liberty to make what use you please of this letter, and at my expense to publish it in the *Times* newspaper, and in any two papers published in the towns of Dover and Folkestone.— I am, reverend Sir, your obedient servant,

(Signed) H. J. BROCKMAN.’ ”

And with this outline in faint mezzo tints, of a portion of my work which has been both difficult and painful of manipulation, I refer those readers who may desire to dip deeper between the lines, to the journalistic files of the dates herein indicated.

It is with a great glad sigh of refreshment that I shall

now give Aladdin's Lamp the fabulous "rub up," and transport my public into another and clearer atmosphere—the breath of the distant Black Mountains—where the silence is only broken by the ringing of the stones that are being piled together into a magnificent shrine of Adoration, the crown of a lifetime's single-handed work and martyrdom—**Llanthony !**

CHAPTER XXXVIII

"THE HOUSE OF PRAYER"

"We know, O Christ, that Thou art there,
Beside the Sacred Shrine,
To hear and bless Thy servants, Lord,
With Grace and Love Divine."

"**L** LANTHONY" is a word which has been framed by so many thousand lips, whether in veneration, satire, or mere neutral-tinted wonderment, that its sound is familiar to the educated modern ear. I remember, when quite a child, hearing of the Abbey and its Founder, the first as a prodigious achievement, the second—an incomprehensible enthusiast, of whom every one spoke with a sigh and a shake of the head, as though afraid either to praise or censure what was evidently beyond the fence-line of the average plane of thought. It is so natural to picture the Monastery and its beautiful church in their present condition of relative completeness, that only by a determined concentration of imagination can one realise the fact of their erection by the superhuman efforts of a single pair of hands. Five-and-thirty years ago the site of Llanthony Abbey was a wilderness, the only habitations to be seen upon the now monastic ground, being an old farmhouse, one derelict cottage, and a barn of the most forlorn and tumble-down appearance.

But, viewed through the up-to-date lens, the metamorphosis will be found to be almost phenomenal. The desolation of the mountain-side has been transformed into a busy and autocratic little kingdom, where the reins of government rest easily between the fingers of the man who has created this historical centre out of the very sweat of

his own soul. Little by little, and by dint of strenuous progressive exertion, structure upon structure has been raised, first a shed, and then a cloister, and finally step by step the consummation of the masterpiece—the erection of a House of Prayer (although an unfinished one still) in the heart of the far-away hills.

In the autumn of 1869, owing to the generosity of Sister Winifred, thirty-three acres of arable and pasture land were purchased from a neighbouring farmer, together with the right of a sheep-walk on the adjacent mountain. It had been the Monk's dream to restore the ruined Priory four miles lower down the Valley, for the reason of its monastic associations; but in this intention he was thwarted by the owner's objection to the reappearance of the Holy Habit in the Vale of Ewyas. So the alternative was adopted of building an independent Monastery, on the first suitable land that should be offered for sale. The ground on which the Abbey now stands was the outcome of these negotiations, and on St. Patrick's Day of the following year (March 17th, 1870) the foundation stone was laid by the Reverend Father in person, who happened at that moment to be returning from Aberdaron, where he had been taking a short rest, after the prolonged spell of mental strain occasioned by the tempestuous events detailed in the last chapter. This visit to Aberdaron (near Barmouth) is noteworthy in a double sense, first from its proximity to the island of Bardsey, called Holy Isle, for the reason that twenty thousand Monks are buried there; and further, because it was in this neighbourhood that Father Ignatius wrote one of the legendary poems most widely associated with his name. Incessant gales prevented him from penetrating into the island itself; but the inspiration of the atmosphere was none the less upon him, and found expression in an idyll dealing with the local mysticism—a work which he dedicated to Lord Newborough, the owner of this curious insular burying-ground.

Strangely enough, this courteous initiative remained apparently negative in consequences for a space of twenty

years. At the end of that period the Reverend Father received a letter, telling him that Lord Newborough had just passed away, and that amongst his last wishes he had left express instructions that the Abbot of Llanthony should be asked to officiate at his funeral on Bardsey Island—an unconventional but not insignificant souvenir of the Monk's tribute to the Holy Isle and its proprietor.

The first Llanthony Mass was celebrated almost synchronously with the laying of the foundation stone. It was said by Father Husband, an Associate Priest, who had accompanied the Reverend Father on his holiday, and there being no altar available, an impromptu one was arranged in the old farmhouse, where, in spite of primitive surroundings, the Sacred Rite was performed with impressive reverence. The consecrated stone once laid, and the preliminaries of the building contract duly completed, the Founder of the new Abbey in embryo, returned to Lakeham to resume Community-life, and fulfil the numerous Mission engagements which awaited him in all parts of England. Amongst the many pulpits which the Reverend Father occupied at this moment of his life, was that of the celebrated Mr. Purchas, and it was at St. James's, Brighton, that the Monk first gained his foothold in this popular seaside town, where for over thirty years he has hardly ever failed to hold a Mission in the height of its crowded season. The sermons preached at St. James's were not so numerous as they were memorable. The congregations they attracted were so enormous that it was impossible to give them standing-room, and the scenes enacted at the doors were almost reminiscent of Lombard Street, though in a minor and more harmonious key. On one occasion, a lady had her arm broken in her struggles to force her way through the crowd; and I have heard more than one eye-witness declare that for hours before the services, the church doors presented a spectacle similar to an "Early Pit" on a gigantic scale, waiting to make a rush for admission on some popular "first night." Nor was this only a spasm of passing emotion aroused by that most potent of magnets—novelty!

When, later on, the Father transferred his Missions to the public platform, the same loyal multitude rallied round him, and to this day his yearly advent to the "Old Ship" is looked upon by many as quite an indispensable feature of the season's programme.

Not until the wane of July 1870, did the final installation of the Community at Llanthony take place, and even at that date the Abbey premises consisted of nothing more impressive than one newly built shed, and the dilapidated barn of which mention has already been made. Owing to the lease of the farmhouse having still a year to run, it was impossible to turn it into a temporary Monastery, the tenants being still in possession, and not unnaturally reluctant to vacate at a few weeks' notice. It had been hoped, that in the interim the workmen might have managed to have pushed things sufficiently forward to have completed some sort of shelter by the date of the Monks' arrival; but the difficulties were enormous, and the only erection accomplished was that of the shed, a small building of a few feet square, with a flagstone floor and roughly tiled-in roof.

The Reverend Father was himself too busy to be able to give personal supervision to the progress of the work; but in the hope of keeping more or less of an authoritative eye upon the builders, he sent forward two of his Community, who were lodged picnic-fashion in a small hut (locally termed a cottage), which has long since been removed from the monastic estate. Many things tended to produce a climax of stagnation in the carrying forward of the building contract. The desolation of the site, and its distance from town or village, rendered the workmen's task almost a desperate one. Stone-hauling over rough hilly roads, and often over mere mountain tracks, was a discouraging and laborious occupation, and the men complained bitterly of the hardships they endured by reason of the isolation of the locality, and the scarcity of accommodation in the few scattered farms, which covered an area of several miles.

All these considerations converging towards an inevitable complication of difficulties, and perhaps failure, the Reverend Father resolved to cut the crisis short by plunging into the midst of it himself, and by a show of personal grit and energy, to bolster up the courage of the disheartened builders, who were evidently quite beyond the handling of his two Monk-delegates. In a word, he determined to move the little Community permanently from Laleham to Llanthony, even at the risk of being forced to camp out on the bare mountain-side in default of a better shelter. Father Ignatius chose to look upon this prospect in the light of a capital adventure, and in this manner he brought a bright and cheery atmosphere to bear upon what might otherwise have proved a formidable stumbling-block to the vocation of more than one member of his heterogeneous spiritual family.

With the exception of this unlooked-for *contretemps*, the monastic horizon was evincing distinct signs of clearing, at least so far as the prosperity of the newly founded Communities was concerned. At Feltham, the Convent of Nuns had maintained its promising beginning, and even in the more secular branches of the work a steady scale of progress was to be recorded. The Mission House, which (since the separation of the Order from Sister Gertrude) had been moved from its original quarters to Hart Street, Bloomsbury, was now under the management of an excellent Prioress, and in all respects a model business centre for the hundred and one details connected with the public side of the Reverend Father's career. It was therefore with a grateful as well as a brave heart that the Superior turned his face towards the Black Mountains, and realised that henceforward they were to be his home, and the home of those who with God's help, would join him in his great spiritual endeavour, and perpetuate his name as Founder of a national as well as an ideal House of Prayer.

That exodus from Laleham to Llanthony the Monk is never likely to forget! Even now, as the hands of Time sweep the calendar, and stop at July 22nd, he recalls as



EXTERIOR OF THE ABBEY CHURCH AND PART OF THE MONASTERY
INCLUDING THE ABBOT'S CELL.

one of the two great memories invoked by that anniversary, the long weary journey to the Holy Valley, and its safe accomplishment through the special intervention of a merciful Omnipotence.

Thirty-four years ago, Llanthony was even more of an out-of-the-world spot than it is to-day, when sometimes many hundred pilgrims crowd simultaneously to the famous Abbey Shrine, and a more or less easy carriage-road has been effected between the ruins of the Old Priory and the present Monastery standing four miles higher up the mountain valley. In the remoter age of 1870, the Priory was looked upon as the farthest point of civilisation upon the local map, being already seven miles from the nearest railway station, and the frontier terminus beyond which lay the Land of Nowhere, known only to shepherds and a few scattered proprietary farmers.

The difficulties with which Father Ignatius had to contend were not light. In the first place, he carried with him, on a journey which involved many changes, no less a Companion than the Blessed Sacrament, a Feature which in Itself demanded very special care, and the attendance of at least one kneeling watcher during the entire transit. This vigil was apportioned in turn to the Superior and his subordinates; and to the honour of the average British secular be it added, that not once during this long and interrupted cross-journey, did a single individual, either by word or look, seek to bring a breath of scant respect upon the beautiful oak Tabernacle, whose Contents no one could pretend to misconstrue. But the sight of the kneeling Monk, the significant Casket, and the silent black-robed group which surrounded It, seemed to subdue rather than provoke public curiosity, and, from a spiritual point of view at least, this strange journey was made in absolute tranquillity.

Nevertheless, the mundane side of the achievement was fraught with many drawbacks. The "infant Samuel," who was then little over six years old, formed one of the travelling party, and this addition alone meant increased

tension and responsibility for the older members of the Community. By the time that they had reached Llanfihangel-Crucorney (the farthest railway point of their long and anxious pilgrimage) early evening was already setting in, and the weary child was in a condition far more adapted to a good sleep in a comfortable bed, than an eleven miles' drive over rough roads in an old country dog-cart. The start up the Valley was anything but propitious. No vehicle of any kind could be procured save one small dog-cart—a dilemma which necessitated that most of the Monks should make for the Monastery on foot, and across mountains, which in the falling twilight, looked anything but inviting for a forced march of many miles.

There was however no help for it, so the poor Brothers set out pluckily enough, leaving their Superior and his Sacred Charge, together with the child and one other Monk, to the care of the man who had undertaken to drive them to their destination. In the confusion and anxiety of seeing his Community start upon so long and unexpected a walk, the Reverend Father had paid no attention to the appearance of the horse which was to draw himself and those with him from the station to their distant home. The cart was not heavily loaded, but owing doubtless to the unfinished state of the roads, and the unfortunate creature's limited powers of endurance, not much more than one-half of the long ascent was accomplished, before it became evident that the animal was unequal to the strain imposed upon it. The Reverend Father's natural love for the four-footed members of God's creation is too well known for it to be even surmised that he permitted the poor willing beast to be either over-driven or beaten. But even with every precautionary care and frequent halts for rest, things grew rapidly worse, and at last, when night had set in and they were miles from any village, there was no doubt that if they went very much farther, the horse would simply die between the shafts.

The Father's distress was rendered the more acute by

the recollection of The Presence which was thus exposed to the probability of a night under the stars, and also by the frightened whimper of the tired child, who, worn out and peevish, kept up a tearful entreaty to be allowed to go to bed.

There seemed but one solution to their dilemma—to possess their souls in patience (and darkness) until the following dawn. It was impossible to proceed on foot, and, to make matters worse, the driver lost his head and temper. Turning upon the Reverend Father, he accused him, in the foulest language, of being the cause of the disaster. "The Monk had killed his beast," he declared, "by bringing it over roads that no one ever used!"

It was hopeless to argue or remonstrate with the man. The Father got out of the cart, saw that the horse was eased of its trappings, and that every means were taken to relieve its condition, which was undoubtedly desperate.

Near the spot where this accident happened was one small cottage, inhabited it was said, by a miser and a witch, or in other words, by an old couple who were credited with an occult power of attracting to their hut whole flights of every bird upon the wing.

Spying a light in this cottage—the only sign of life within sight—the Reverend Father sent the driver to knock at the door and enlist the sympathy of those within. At sight of the old man and woman who appeared upon the threshold, the Monk went forward and pleaded his own cause. "Might he ask," said he, "for temporary shelter for a very tired little child, whom an unlucky chance had stranded with himself and others upon the open mountains?"

Whether from fear or displeasure caused by a glimpse of their visitor's unusual-looking garb, it is impossible to surmise, but the upshot of his appeal was a decisive refusal of admission from the owners of the cottage.

Meanwhile the light was fading rapidly. With a wailing child clinging to his habit, half dropping with sleep and fatigue, and a helpless horse whose owner vented his sense of injury in a perpetual broadside of unsavoury oaths, the

Monk's surroundings were scarcely cheering. The desolation of the mountains was absolutely oppressive and their silence well-nigh unbearable, inasmuch as it seemed to accentuate the only sounds that broke it—the man's rough voice, and the gasping breath of the unfortunate animal, which to all appearance seemed about to die before their eyes. Never, says the Reverend Father, will he forget the anxiety and weird pathos of that scene. Those only who know the locality and can conjure it in imagination to its primitive wildness of over thirty years ago—those only can understand the utter isolation of the spot, and the predicament of those stranded upon it.

But in the midst of the Monk's difficulties, a sudden thought thrilled him—the remembrance of the Mighty Fellow-Traveller, Who like themselves, was fain to brave the hardships of a long and lonely night. Bidding the little child follow his example, the Reverend Father fell on his knees before the Tabernacle, and addressing his petition to the Blessed Presence it enshrined, he cast all his care at the feet of Jesus, beseeching Him to have pity on their necessity.

This was one of the moments in the Father's life which he never hesitates to describe as "miraculous." No sooner had the prayer left his lips, than its answer was with him. Not a miracle such as the children of men might anticipate or applaud, but just a simple demonstration of the exquisite justice which glorifies even the lightest touch of the Majestic Hand. The Lord Jesus did not call down Elijah's chariot from Heaven to carry the belated party to their place of shelter. It was on the poor humble beast, the dumb but sorest sufferer of them all, that the marvellous work of mercy was wrought. The Monk, the countryman, and the little child were gently put aside, while one of "the least of these" was chosen. Can anything surpass the superb God-like lesson of this strange election? Nothing—at least nothing in this world.

The Reverend Father had scarcely risen to his feet before he was aware that some extraordinary occurrence

had taken place. The angry driver had suddenly ceased his cursings, and sought to replace them with cringing apologies, and a species of nervous deference which stood in need of interpretation. The riddle was not difficult to solve! The worn-out horse, which but a moment before had been evincing unmistakable symptoms of a fatal termination to its sufferings, now stood beside them strong and fit, and with every appearance of being able to trot a few stiff miles before the moon got up. The metamorphosis was so startling—from a miserable moribund to a hale, hearty roadster—that for an instant it was quite impossible to realise the supernatural quality of the atmosphere in which they found themselves thus suddenly immersed.

The reaction following on this crisis was so irresponsible that it was almost mechanical, in spite of the species of hushed emotion which could not fail to be present even in the soul of the little oblate boy. Without exchanging so much as a word together, the mystified rustic set about getting his resuscitated steed once more between the shafts, while the Reverend Father replaced the child in the cart and took his seat beside him, in a silence which no one seemed to care or dare to be the first to break.

The rest of that memorable drive was a veritable triumph! No matter how steep the hills or how impassable the rugged mountain track, the plucky little horse took them at a steady trot and without so much as turning a hair. Worn out, but thankful and awestruck, the tired travellers finally arrived at their journey's end, much to the relief of the two anxious Brothers, who from sundown had been posted on the mountain-side eagerly listening for the expected sound of wheels. The pedestrian portion of the new-comers did not arrive till 4 a.m. on the following day, having hopelessly lost their way in the darkness which so soon overtook their steps on leaving Llanfihangel.

Altogether, the installation of Father Ignatius and his Monks in their Anglo-Benedictine Abbey was scarcely an occasion of unmixed joy or safety. The Superior's quarters

consisted of the miserable shed (now used as a store-pantry), whither he retired with the baby oblate, after having reverently deposited the Blessed Sacrament in the neighbouring barn, where for that one night only It was left under the guardianship of a Sanctuary lamp. The next morning the Tabernacle was removed to the Superior's shed, where a small altar was erected and the Offices of the twenty-four hours duly performed. And in this humble hut, where through the crevices between the tiles, the stars blinked and twinkled at him, Father Ignatius opened the crowning chapter of his strange, unrestful life. The floor of this shed was the bare flagstones, and so damp was it, that frequently as autumn drew on, when he rose in the morning to wake the Brothers for Prime, his blankets would be steaming, and the whole atmosphere charged with vapour. How so delicate a man ever survived such an ordeal, is in itself a mystery, but inasmuch as (psychologically speaking) this entire biography is a tissue of almost abnormal occurrences, these details are but single threads of the skein.

The arrival of the enterprising Abbot and his tiny flock was an event which occurred none too soon in their own interest. Although the builder had already reached the time-limit of his contract for the erection of the first or western cloister, not a roof was up, and the work had come to a dismal standstill, owing to the inclemency of the weather and the terrible hardships to which the men were subjected for want of adequate shelter. These same drawbacks the Monks themselves were fain to encounter! The barn had to serve as refectory, dormitory, and storehouse, while the shed did duty for Abbot's cell, choir, and chapel. The vans which transferred the furniture and heavy luggage from Laleham to Llanthony one and all "got stuck" at least four miles down the Valley, and they had to be unloaded and their contents brought up piecemeal in little country carts. Even the Reverend Father at last felt sorely tempted to be depressed by the never-ceasing relays of difficulties which seemed to beset his path.

But he struggled manfully to laugh at these minor miseries, and reminded his Monks that they were only following the precedent of the old times at Citeaux and Fountains, and many other important religious Houses which had been inaugurated under no more luxurious circumstances. And thus, by dint of a little banter and a determined show of grit on the part of their Superior, the poor Benedictines made up their minds to be very uncomfortable, but nevertheless serenely happy.

By the middle of August the process of building was once more in full swing, and the Abbot's influence over the workmen so complete, that he was able to spur them on to real effort by the mere fact of his presence in their midst. The news that "a community of hermits had been installed in the fastnesses of the Hatterel Hills" was likewise a result of his arrival which could not fail to make itself felt. Some attempts were made by the curious to invade this "world's end," as satirists were pleased to christen the locality, but inasmuch as prohibitive orders were given, by which all strangers were restricted from entering the monastic territory, the visitors' list was soon reduced to a limited chosen few. Amongst the first admissions granted by the Abbot were those solicited by an interesting party which included the late Marquis of Bute, Lady Herbert of Lea, the (Benedictine) Prior of Belmont, and another personage whom the Reverend Father thinks was Lord Gainsborough, although his memory is not quite absolute as to the name. This visit took place on the 29th of August 1870, when the barn and shed were still the representative Abbey buildings, and the first Cloister but a very undeveloped piece of structure. The visitors however, seemed deeply interested in all they heard and saw, especially Lord Bute, who, before leaving, accompanied the Father to his shed, and joined with him in a prayer before the Blessed Sacrament. The ladies of the party were of course excluded from crossing the cloistered precincts, but from a distance they were enabled to get a very comprehensive view of the estate and the progress

which the workmen were making in the erection of the new Monastery.

From every point of view, the kindly sympathy expressed by this visit must have been very gratifying to the Monk, whose long and weary labours had been so mercilessly misrepresented by the clamour of an ignorant crowd; but the knowledge that his visitors were distinguished members of the Roman Communion was a note of interest which lent the occasion a very special charm. Albeit himself an immutable Anglican, Father Ignatius was keenly appreciative of this welcome tribute from a branch of the Catholic Church for which he has ever entertained sentiments of the most openly declared veneration.

With the close of September the air of the mountains grew keen, and by the commencement of the autumn fall, the sufferings of the Community increased to the verge of the unbearable. One Brother became so ill that the Reverend Father decided to send him back to his friends; and two others, who were not sick but only faint-hearted, ran away. There were however six, who remained faithful, and with this small handful, the daily round of the monastic Hours was cheerfully fulfilled. Every spare moment was occupied with raids up the mountains in search of sticks, for "fire" had become a necessary of life long before the leaves were off the trees, and coals were out of the question in so remote a corner of the earth. By Advent-tide the much prayed for Cloister was at length under cover—that is to say, its roof was completed, and sundry panes of glass were gradually filling the upstairs window frames.

The scene which the "Abbey" presented at this period during Conference time (about 6 p.m.) might well have furnished some of our Old Masters with a theme worthy of immortality. The composition would have been as follows:—"Firelight in an unfinished stone Refectory. A group of half a dozen Monks gathered round the wood fire which is heaped beneath an open chimney on the damp earth floor. Before the gaping casements blankets are hung, but the wind that sways them, and the moisture

actually dripping on occasion from the walls, speak better than any thermometer for the chilling temperature which must be freezing the veins of those six uncomplaining men. The only sign of suffering is given by the involuntary droop of their closely-drawn hoods, and the almost imperceptible shiver with which one or another draws nearer the blazing pile—the solitary grain of earthly comfort to be obtained in that desolate spot. Five are listeners. The sixth reads aloud in measured cadence some passage from a saintly life, or any other pious selection set apart for that evening’s meditation.

“An hour or two later—Compline in the Abbot’s ‘cell,’ then Silence and dispersion for bed, the Brothers to the barn, the Superior and the infant oblate to their shed, where the moon and stars look in at the roof, and the red lamp flickers before the Tabernacle on the little altar—the only resting-place which loving hearts can offer the Son of Man whereon to lay His head.”

A picture somewhat on these lines, and dashed in by the hand of a Rembrandt or Velasquez, would give a consummate masterpiece to the ideal School of Art, which combines inspiration with devotional reticence and the mysticism of another world.

CHAPTER XXXIX

"ONE STONE UPON ANOTHER"

"Let holy Contemplation be
Our chiefest duty now ;
At Matins, and at Evensong,
We will devoutly bow."

BY Monastic Law a curious privilege is attached to the founders and co-builders of an Abbey or Priory, albeit seculars of either sex. They can claim a stall within choir, instead of mixing with the rest of the lay congregation outside the Enclosure gates which divide the kingdom of the Cloister from that of the busy world. At Llanthony there are a goodly few who have a right to this prerogative, the list being undoubtedly headed by Sister Winifred, to whose generous gift of £1000 the Abbey owes the ground on which it is built.

When, in the spring of 1870, actual building work commenced, Father Ignatius had but a small capital of £887 in hand. Then came another £300 from Miss Cameron, his faithful Highland friend, and a second similar sum from a Miss Seabrook (better known as Sister Anna and the promoter of the Abbey Fund), who had been a member of one of his London congregations. With these reinforcements, the enterprise bid fair to develop as quickly as the local drawbacks of weather and an out-of-the-world site would permit.

On the 2nd of September in the same eventful year, the Reverend Father was much cheered by a visit from his own father and mother, who were naturally deeply interested in seeing this far-away Monastery Home, which they, better than most, knew to be the realisation of a life's dream and



BIBLE-READING TIME IN THE CLOISTER, LLANTHONY ABBEY

sacrifice. There was no means of lodging Mr. and Mrs. Lyne in the immediate neighbourhood of the Abbey, so they had to content themselves with rooms at the inn in the village—Old Llanthony—from which they could drive to and fro without much difficulty on the fine warm summer days. An interesting record of this visit is still extant at the Monastery, in the shape of two structural stones, each one bearing the initial of the parent by whom it was laid—"F. L." and "L. G. L." respectively. These relics are to be found by the south end window of the (then) Monks' Dormitory, and they rest in close proximity one to the other.

By the approach of Christmas, things were sufficiently forward for a temporary chapel to be inaugurated in one of the rooms which is now used for the acolytes' recreation. The bell brought from Elm Hill Priory was duly installed in a convenient position, and before the year was out, the whole Valley could hear it by night as well as day, ringing the sequence of the monastic Hours like a solitary voice in the midst of a silent world. The great bell of St. Bernard, which at the present time is only used for Mass and Angelus, is altogether a newer institution, being dedicated to its generous namesake, the "Father Bernard" to whom Llanthony owes so deep a debt of gratitude. This good Priest's heart seemed to be entirely centred in the Monastery and its beautiful church, and not till he had been called to rest did the Reverend Father come to know at what a sacrifice of personal indulgence this devoted soul had become the financial corner-stone of the monument of intercession which will never cease to echo with his name. A lump sum of £1300 was only one amongst many substantial gifts which from time to time Father Bernard entrusted to the Superior for expenditure upon the church or Monastery. Circumstances made it impossible for him to secure an endowment to the Abbey after his death, but he strove to compensate this restriction by an annual gift of £400, which only ceased with his own life. It will be easily understood with what loving veneration Llanthony remembers this faithful friend,

and how irremediable has been his loss, since the day that he fell asleep—December 11th, 1882, at Dundry Rectory.

The closing event of the year 1870 was the celebration of the Christmas Midnight Mass in the newly-built chapel—*pro tem*. Father Cyril, the Monastery Chaplain (formerly curate of one of the City churches), had promised to come from London on purpose to celebrate and give Communion. He was to arrive in the early evening of the Vigil, and for some days previously, the Monks had been working their hardest, preparing and decorating the chapel, and making ready as far as lay in their power to give their Priest-Brother a warm welcome. The weather unfortunately, was terribly unpropitious. Deep snow lay upon the mountains, and the cold was intense, so much so that the Abbot felt no small anxiety for the traveller who had to face eleven freezing miles, after a long railway journey, which in itself would be a sufficiently chilly undertaking. When the night fell however, and no Father Cyril was forthcoming, this anxiety grew into very serious alarm, and it became evident that unless some kind angel saw fit to intervene, there would be no Mass that midnight, for want of a celebrant, and very likely, a frozen man upon the mountains before the dawn broke. But there was still a more logical reflection and a reassuring one. In all probability Father Cyril had never left Llanfihangel, seeing the state of the weather, or at any rate he had been persuaded to stay at Old Llanthony, and with this relative ray of comfort the disappointed Community had to be content. It was useless to send out a search party, for the mountain tracks were completely obliterated, and the situation was too grave to admit of an aimless wild-goose chase. So the doors were reluctantly fastened, and all hope was abandoned of seeing Father Cyril, or of hearing his Mass. Vigil was however kept by the whole Community (the Abbot included), and prayers were offered for the belated traveller, wheresoever he might happen to be.

Meanwhile the long-suffering Father Cyril was in reality far nearer to his anxious Monk-friends than they dared even

to hope. About half an hour before midnight, a hasty knocking was heard at the outer door, and on opening it, who should be standing on the snow-covered threshold but the Priest himself, cold and tired, it is true, but otherwise in the best of health and spirits.

Father Cyril's account of his day's journey was weird and wonderful. It was only by a miracle that he had ever reached the Monastery alive. Leaving London that morning, he had arrived at Hereford in the early afternoon with the intention of visiting the Cathedral, and especially the shrine of St. Thomas Cantelupe, before resuming his route to Llanfihangel by a convenient later train. This few hours' delay very nearly cost the poor Priest his life. Quite unaware of the heavy snow which awaited him at his destination, and happily ignorant of the species of locality towards which he was bound, Father Cyril arrived at the little station terminus in the wintry gloaming, and despite the warning given him by the few samples of humanity whom he chanced to encounter, he cheerfully set out on foot up the Valley, rather elated than otherwise by the prospect of an eleven miles' walk.

Night however came on apace, and before he had made a record of half the distance, a blinding snow began to fall which seriously impeded his progress. Things were bearable nevertheless, until the old village was left behind; and it was not until the road came to an end (which it did in those days) and he was forced to follow an uncertain footway over the open hills, that the plucky Priest became fully aware of the foolhardiness of his undertaking. It was then too late to retrace his steps, the darkness and cold were intense, and in a short time he found himself plunging blindly into snowdrifts and wandering helplessly, first in one direction, then another, without the least knowledge of his whereabouts, or whether he was skirting some perilous ravine, instead of the beaten track which he had been directed not to leave. Hour after hour he pushed desperately forward, in the hope of meeting with some shelter or the sight of a friendly habitation, but not one sign of life

far or near could he discover, and his heart sank within him for very cold and exhaustion, as he thought of the anxious Monks, who were waiting for their Mass, and his own hopeless plight, perhaps only a few yards away from their door. Not a sound broke the stillness! He listened for the Monastery bell, and shouted lustily in the hope of being heard in some shepherd's hut which might chance to be near, but his voice seemed faint and muffled in the falling snow, and it brought forth no breath of response. Then Father Cyril gave himself up for lost. He knew that very soon he must sink down in that overwhelming lethargy which long exposure in a freezing atmosphere induces, and mostly develops into death, and he sought to resign himself with what strength remained to him, both prayerfully and cheerfully to the will of God. It was at this moment, when commending his spirit to The Merciful, that the figure of a man suddenly stood behind him, surrounded by a bright light. In an instant he knew it to be that of St. Thomas Cantelupe, the saint whose shrine he had that day visited, and towards whom he had always felt a very special devotion.

Father Cyril's first impression was that the holy man had come to console him in his last moments, but it was soon evident that St. Thomas had a very different, if no less charitable aim in view. Without speaking, he beckoned the Priest to follow him, and turning towards the direction of the Monastery, he began retracing the very way which Father Cyril had lately come with so much toil and difficulty. The unhappy pedestrian had obviously overstepped his destination, for judging by distance and time, and the advantage of short cuts, it must almost have been half-way to Hay—a small town eight miles on the other side of the Monastery—where the good saint met the wanderer and saved him from a miserable fate. St. Thomas walked in front, Father Cyril affirmed, while he followed, by the light shed from the radiance which surrounded the apparition. And in this manner the Monastery door was finally reached, both the saint and his supernatural light

disappearing, or ceasing to be seen, as soon as the work of rescue was completed.

Thus ran the wonderful account rendered by Father Cyril to the Abbot and Monks of Llanthony, of his adventurous walk on Christmas Eve, 1870, from Llanfihangel Crucorney, to the Benedictine Abbey of St. Mary and St. David. To many this story may sound too legendary and fantastic to be deemed true. Nevertheless, it is the solemn testimony of a man whose reputation certainly lies above the level of an idle or malicious fable-monger.

I must not omit to mention that one of the best-known prose works to which the Reverend Father's name is attached was written in this same year. *Brother Placidus* was penned in a tiny hermitage or cabin, built on a lovely spot in the mountain ravine—an ideal fine-weather sanctum—where the busy Abbot was wont to pass many a quiet hour with no companion but the birds and wild flowers, and in a silence broken only by the soft obligato of warble, wind, and waterfall. The sale of this little volume was productive of a goodly sum for the Abbey funds, and to this day it is much in request amongst those who love to strike the deeper chords of life. The work deals with a double thread—Society and the Cloister—and it is written straight from the shoulder, with the originality and vigour that are inseparable from all that Father Ignatius either speaks or pens.

The year 1871 was an especially trying one, for it entailed almost perpetual absences from the Abbey, for the purpose of missionising from town to town, in order to obtain funds for the completion of the Monastery buildings, and the commencement of the ardently desired church and Convent, which as yet only existed on the architect's chart. These absences soon became fatalities as far as the Community was concerned. Those Brothers, who with the upholding crutch of the Father's presence could face the severity of the Rule and the isolation of their out-of-the-world Cloister, were quite unequal to the mental or spiritual strain of being left to their own resources. Some collapsed

physically, others grew depressed and discontented, and more than one abandoned the life before the year was out.

It is strange, but nevertheless a fact, that monastically speaking, the bane of Father Ignatius' career has been his inability to be in two places at once. He has been called to play *dual* leading rôles in the same drama, and the impersonations have not unnaturally overlapped and collided. Stripping away all veneer of speech, this enforced assumption of Monk-Missioner may be plainly expressed as a blessing to the world, a curse to the Monastery, yet an indispensable necessity to both. The world has needed the Monk of the Black Mountains as a soul-seeker and Evangelist, and Jesus Christ has needed him also, to fight His battles—as no other contemporary has seen fit to fight them—against the combined bayonets of an antagonistic Church and State. On the other hand, the Monk himself has been constrained to rely on his spiritual children beyond the Cloister, for the pecuniary support, without which his Monastery could never have been raised, far less maintained. These complex considerations have kept the scales heavily but evenly balanced.

The result has been a lifelong struggle with a divided duty, a struggle which to this day is an ever present burden of overwhelming responsibility, fraught with many disappointments, many failures, yet compensated withal by countless tokens of Divine sympathy. And thus, in all probability, will this keynote continue to be sounded, in the same strain for the same cause, until Time wafts it away into echo. People will still say, "Father Ignatius does not keep his Monks," and they will not take the trouble to grasp the wherefore. Were it not a breach of Christian charity, a chapter both long and interesting might be devoted solely to those who from weakness or perversity, have forsaken their Abbot, their peaceful mountain home, and their Holy Rule, only to entreat to be taken back, after intervals differing from a few weeks to a lapse of several years. Some have been received and forgiven many times, and in one instance eight separate

occasions were vouchsafed to the same individual, who twice made the journey on foot from London to Llanthony, so eager was he to show his contrition by this severe act of penance. Even to its apostate children, Llanthony is "a name to conjure." Those who have lived within its Enclosure seem unable to withstand, even from afar, the magnetic influence of its memories. With but few exceptions, *all* who have left, have sooner or later moved heaven and earth to return, and this is a curious psychic fact, the veracity of which I have had the opportunity of testing from documentary evidence, as well as more recent personal observation.

This apparently irrelevant digression is by no means without a purpose. Outside voices have talked so long and loud about the instability of the Llanthony Monks, that it is instructive to those interested in this biography, to strike the root of the very special spiritual difficulties, under which this particular Community has never ceased to labour.

In the remoter days of the early seventies, the enforced absences of the Superior were even more numerous than at this present date, for the times were stirring, and the necessity for raising funds a pressing incentive to accept the many Mission engagements which were offered him from all parts of the country. In 1871 a public movement was mooted, which pointed significantly to the monastic institutions domiciled in the United Kingdom. Mr. Newdegate proposed his Bill for the supervision of Monkeries and Nunneries by a system of Government visitations, and a preliminary Committee was appointed to "sit" upon the question in the House. There being at that time but one Enclosed Monastery in the Anglican Communion, Mr. Lyne—in his quality of the Abbot's father—was called upon to attend this important *séance*, in order to give such information as might lead to official enlightenment on the subject of his son's position as resurrector of a Religious Order in the British Church.

Early in 1872 came the information from Mr. Griffith,

Lord Hereford's estate agent, that stone might be taken from the quarries for the building of the Abbey Church, at the rate of twopence the yard. The Monks' living quarters were by this time sufficiently completed to admit of funds and energies being turned towards the Church. On the 22nd of August in the same year, the foundation stone was laid and solemnly blessed by Father Cyril, who despite his terrible Christmas Eve experiences, was a frequent visitor at Llanthony.

I have purposely spoken little of the geographical position of the Abbey and its adjoining church, and of the exquisitely picturesque spot in which both are set. The Valley of Ewyas and its surroundings are already familiar to every reader of Guides to South Wales, and to describe them in these pages would be unnecessary padding.

I shall only mention that, in directing his architect, Father Ignatius expressed his intention of following as far as possible the periods and structure of the ruined Priory four miles lower down the Valley. Llanthony Abbey, therefore, as it now stands, is an erection based on early English and Norman lines. Of the three buildings—Monastery, Church, and Convent—not one is as yet what may be called altogether complete. Of the Church, only the choir stands. This, for want of funds, has never been enlarged; while the Convent, which is the latest addition of all, is only a temporary one, though affording ample and comfortable accommodation for the needs of a numerous Community. It is to the Church, however, that every eye involuntarily turns, the far-away mountain altar, where the Sacramental Presence reigns in supreme perpetuity, and where all is a lavish mingling of flowers and lights, seen through the clouds of daily offered incense. It is impossible to realise that all this beauty can have sprung from one rugged fragment of rock—the stone censed and aspersed on the 22nd of August 1872 by the hand of Father Cyril.

The master-touch in the whole building is, undoubtedly, the reredos, which alone cost nearly £2000, and is carved



THE HIGH ALTAR, LLANTHONY ABBEY
CONTAINING IN THE TABERNACLE DR. PUSEY'S "MIRACULOUS MONSTRANCE"

in stone and various marbles by an expert, from a design executed by one of the Monks. The result is a most beautiful Munich altarpiece. Up to the present day, the magnificence of the interior is confined to the Cloister side of the closely barred grille, which divides the sanctuary and stalls from the secular Church. This latter is simplicity itself, and is chiefly draped with blue, in honour of the Blessed Virgin, whose Altar and Shrine it encloses, together with a more than life-size Crucifix of striking and pathetic beauty.

Needless to say, it was only by the aid of very generous and combined gifts that this sumptuous Church was ever erected at all, and only by superhuman efforts on the part of the Superior, that the portion of the expenses falling to his own share were never allowed to drift into a debt. But "to owe no man anything" is one of Father Ignatius' self-imposed restrictions which he never oversteps. No matter what personal exertions and sacrifice this maxim might incur, not a stone was permitted to enter the Llanthony precincts until its price was in hand for immediate payment.

It was in the same year (1872) that the Reverend Father's thoughts were first directed towards the man who, perhaps, in all the world was his own most striking antithesis—Charles Bradlaugh, the great sower of Atheism and Free Thought in this land. One of the Anglican dignitaries had attempted (said the newspapers) to give a Christian address at the Hall of Science—the Infidels' Tabernacle, in the East of London—and the result had spelt discomfiture both for the preacher and his cause. This defeat, as far as the Reverend Father was concerned, bristled with suggestion as to the possibility of raising the fallen Colours, and upon the inspiration of a sudden impulse, he penned a note there and then to Mr. Bradlaugh, asking if he would allow an utter stranger and a Monk to come and speak to his people on the subject of Jesus Christ. Up to this time, Father Ignatius and Mr. Bradlaugh had never met, and had only been interested in each other's existence, as contemporary leaders of two great though

conflicting crusades could not fail to be—that is to say, in an indirect and impersonal sense. To the Monk's surprise and intense satisfaction, his note met with an immediate answer, couched in the most courteous terms, expressive of the writer's acquiescence with his somewhat far-fetched proposition. This letter, which I have had the pleasure of reading, placed the Hall of Science at the Reverend Father's disposal, on any date which he might be pleased to appoint as most convenient to himself. And thus, by the mere handling of a pen, two opposite and representative human parallels were brought into close touch one with the other, two honest and fearless opponents, stirred by that mutual but nameless sympathy, which is the friendship permissible to enemies who are not weak enough to lose their greatness of soul, in the bigotry of cause and conviction.

CHAPTER XL

"JESUS "

"In the Name of Jesus
All God's Love is found,
And the Name of Jesus
Is Heaven's sweetest sound."

THE year of grace 1872 was a busy one for mind and body so far as the Abbot of Llanthony was concerned. As a Missioner-Evangelist, or "the Moody of the upper classes," as a playful journalist was pleased to style him, Father Ignatius was obliged to keep his eye on the world's game of chess, and make careful note of the moves not only of its Bishops, but of its Royalties also. The outbreak of the Carlist War was for him an event of keen interest, partly, no doubt, for its reflex significance to European policy, but still more for the direct religious influence which the assumption of the Spanish throne by the Bourbon representative could not fail to bring to the fore. The Monk's sympathy for Carlos VII. led to a most interesting correspondence between the two. Masses were said at the Abbey on behalf of the "righteous cause," while even on the battlefield, Don Carlos enjoined that a special mention of "Llanthony" should be included in the supplicatory intentions offered daily for the friends and promoters of his kingly claims. From Queen Margherita likewise, the Reverend Father received more than one acknowledgment of his kind words of sympathy. The Abbot's principal Carlist correspondent was no less interesting a personality than Colonel Charles Edward Stuart, who besides being an active champion of the House of Bourbon, declared himself to be the

direct and legitimate male descendant of Bonnie Prince Charlie.

This interchange of letters marks one of the many historical budgets stored away among the curios of Llanthony reminiscences. Unfortunately for Father Ignatius' natural individuality, the daily burden of his own heavy enterprise has left him little time or strength for the expansion of personal sentiment. Nevertheless, there have been typical occasions in his life—and the Carlist War was amongst them—when the human problem has so irresistibly overlapped the religious standpoint with the political, that both Monk and man have been merged into the breathless onlooker, the enthusiast alike of Cross and Sword.

But the year was destined to be fertile in Anglo-Benedictine detail, without the intervention of outside pre-occupations. With the weight of a most trying Rule perpetually upon his spirit, and the addition of a long list of Missions to be held at successive but irregular intervals, the Reverend Father could not be blind to the reckless temerity of his offer to address Mr. Bradlaugh's many thousand disciples on a subject which could only inflame their anti-Christian passion to the verge of white heat. That the Monk of Llanthony would preach "Jesus and Him Only," was a conclusion which no frequenter of the Hall of Science could pretend to ignore. Yet, strange to say, even with the retreating steps of a Bishop still sounding in their ears, not a single protest opposed the unanimous vote which was passed for the acceptance of the great Evangelist's simply worded proposition. Mr. Bradlaugh read the Father's letter to a Convocation of over a thousand Freethinkers, who received it with unmitigated approval. It may be that they treated the Monk's initiative as a good joke or a monstrous poor one, but the upshot pointed to a large-minded courtesy of which many a professing Christian would do well to borrow the pattern.

A mass meeting was immediately arranged upon the following liberal lines. The platform of the Hall of Science was to be placed at the Reverend Father's disposal on any

evening he chose to designate. The "entertainment" would be limited to two hours' duration (eight to ten o'clock), the Monk having the monopoly of speech for the first half of this period, Mr. Bradlaugh succeeding him for the last, under the same conditions.

Each orator was to enjoy *carte blanche* regarding method and expression, provided that he adhered to the prescribed subject, "Is Jesus Christ an Historical Reality?" With the exception of this restriction and an uncompromising loyalty to time limit, there was to be a free hand all round.

Father Ignatius found no difficulty in agreeing to these terms. A convenient date being mutually decided, the final programme was drawn up for the contest between these two strangely matched gladiators—Ignatius of Jesus, the Monk-Missioner, and Charles Bradlaugh, the master spirit of honest intellectual Atheism.

There must have been a smile upon the lips of Free Thought, and a prayer in the hearts of Christians, when the day came round that was to see the meeting of these champions, face to face in the arena of the public Lecture Hall. The Reverend Father was at that moment staying at the Mission House in Hart Street, Bloomsbury, and for several days past he had devoted every spare moment to the study of the mighty subject on which he had elected to speak to the unhappy deserters from the army of the Great King. It was the Monk's intention to confront Atheism with its own weapons, and, by God's assistance, to pierce it with its individual sword. This intricate evolution of thought demanded not alone copious reflection and concentration, but endless research into ancient history and classics. In this fascinating but exhausting study Father Ignatius immersed himself mind and soul until he had attained his object—the discerning of the spirits of Eastern and Western Philosophy.

"Jesus Christ, the Central Figure of Human History," was his chosen theme. Not as the Saviour of the world, the Personal Gift of God, the Refuge of Sinners, would he first

present his Master to that blind multitude. It should be as the statistical Result of a world-wide Expectancy, the unique Pivot on which universal history has turned ever since the mind of man has known the passion of knowledge, and the prophetic transmission of that knowledge to the generations of unborn ages.

In the hope of planting a pickaxe in the interest of his hearers, Father Ignatius was resolved for once in his life to lay aside his Bible, so far as it was representative of inspired reference, and to rely solely—or at least until the foundations of his discourse should be firmly grounded—on the historical rather than the devotional analysis of his subject.

As though his theme suggested the manipulation of some immortal Flower, he determined to proceed petal by petal to its scientific dissection. Historically, geographically, ethnologically, and morally, he would tell the story of Jesus—the Flower of Flowers—just as the humble botanist might trace the many-folded blendings of some horticultural masterpiece.

He would leave the rest to the fragrance of that Flower! What man yet has been able to express the incense of a field of lilies? And the breath of Jesus! How potently and sweetly the Rose of Sharon might waft peace and pardon to those poor misguided souls!

Father Ignatius bent every fibre in his being towards the preparation of this crucial piece of oratory. Yet even when after relentless application, he had amassed a formidable sheaf of notes, and mastered every technical detail with which he purposed to pillar up his argument, a great wave of discouragement swept over his spirit. Two Christian friends—both ministers of the Gospel—had promised him their prayers in his hour of need, and these sympathetic voices, added to those of his own Community and spiritual children in the world, created an atmosphere around his enterprise which was at once consoling and full of hope.

Nevertheless, the important day found him in a condition of painful nerve-tension—a state of things which seriously alarmed his immediate *entourage*. This consisted

at the moment, of Brother Henry his secretary, and the latter's sister, the Third Order Prioress who presided over the Hart Street Mission House, where the Superior invariably lodged when fulfilling London engagements.

Brother Henry was to accompany the Reverend Father to the Hall of Science, but poor Sister Maria declared herself unequal to the strain of being present at what she felt to be a hopeless and unequal contest, fraught with much personal danger to the Founder of her Order.

It was a very silent and anxious trio that gathered in the simple Mission House sitting-room, an hour or two previous to the momentous pilgrimage into the camp of the enemy. The Reverend Father seemed absorbed in the final readjustment and revision of his notes, and his companions were both too preoccupied and agitated with the anticipation of the pending ordeal, to hazard as much as a word.

It may be imagined with what blank stupefaction this devoted Brother and Sister saw the Monk suddenly and deliberately tear his budget into a thousand pieces, and carefully burn the hardly-gathered treasure of many days' toil. Sister Maria sprang forward with a cry. "Oh, Reverend Father, what are you doing? You cannot mean to destroy those precious notes!"

The Father's answer was characteristic. "I shall not need them, Sister Maria. Our Lord has just told me so. When the time comes, He will put His Own Word into my mouth."

And with this startling assurance the clouds seemed to lift and roll away. Father Ignatius was in the best of spirits, and when at length Brother Henry came to tell him that his cab was at the door, he was brimming over with banter at his secretary's pale face and evident symptoms of uncontrollable alarm. More than once on that remarkable drive, did the Father beg Brother Henry to return home and let him proceed alone to his destination, but this his faithful friend refused to do. By the time they approached within several street-widths of the Hall itself, the crowd was

already large, and of so formidable an appearance, that the secretary besought the Reverend Father not to advance farther, and, if possible, to avoid recognition by making for the door on foot. But the Monk only laughed, and the cab crept on until Old Street came in sight, filled by a dense block of human beings, which effectually brought the vehicle to a stand.

In spite of Brother Henry's agonised entreaties, the Reverend Father had his head out of the window in an instant. "Gentlemen," he said, in a voice which sounded cheerily from side to side of the closely packed thoroughfare, "my name is Ignatius, and I have come to speak to you all to-night! Will some of you kindly help me to get into the Hall?"

The effect of these words, added to a glimpse of the Father's tonsured head and black habit, was prodigious. The multitude literally palpitated with excitement, and in an instant a body of the roughest and least gentle-looking of the bystanders came forward and offered "to see the gentleman safe inside."

As the Monk got out of the cab and placed his person at the discretion of this strange escort, he could not resist taking a rapid *coup d'œil* of the scene and its surroundings. Old Street, St. Luke's, may not be an unfamiliar spot to those whose business has taken them to this distant and uninviting quarter of the map of London, but to the average man and woman about town it is a mere name, over which hangs a species of notoriety which is more ambiguous than savoury.

It has been since affirmed that Mr. Bradlaugh never really believed that the Monk would fulfil his engagement. Be this as it may, the great leader of Irreligion had done his utmost to advertise the occasion to his following. As Father Ignatius stepped into the midst of the seething mass of humanity, his attention was chiefly attracted by two striking contrasts—the black wall of people huddled pell mell on doorsteps, roadway, and pavement, and the gigantic illumination which surmounted the Hall of Science, where

in flaming letters the following announcement smote the public eye: "Father Ignatius and Mr. Bradlaugh at eight this evening."

As the curious-looking *cortège* of Monk and people edged its way towards the side door of the Lecture Hall, a policeman met it, and added his somewhat negative assistance to assure a safe and speedy progress. On arriving at the Hall, the entrance proved to be locked from within, and a short parley ensued through the closed door. "The Father has come!" shouted the leader of the guard of honour; but his announcement was received with a counter-challenge, "We don't believe it;" and for the moment admission seemed doubtful. No sooner, however, had the presence of the Monk become an accepted fact, than the bolts were hastily drawn back, and Charles Bradlaugh in person stepped forward to welcome his guest. Apologising courteously for the delay in his reception, and leading the way to a comfortably appointed waiting-room, this remarkable man set about presenting those around him to the newly arrived Monk, whom for some unaccountable reason he addressed and referred to throughout the evening as the "Holy Father."

Amongst the first introductions, Mr. Bradlaugh took care to single out such interesting personalities as Mr. Jacob Henry Holyoake (the Chairman of the meeting) and his brother, who was no less a popular magnate of the Hall of Science. After the interchange of a pleasant word or two with these gentlemen, the Reverend Father was called upon to make the acquaintance of the famous Mrs. Besant, Miss Harriet Martineau, and several other notabilities of varied, but mostly Atheistic, celebrity. More than one really charming French girl made up the sum of an almost bewildering succession of presentations. These last, said Mr. Bradlaugh, were some of the "Petroleuses" of Paris, or in other words, a selection from the band of female zealots who in the recent Commune had played so desperate and unenviable a part.

To the Reverend Father, this unexpected opportunity of

colliding amicably with so many different phases of human nature, was an occasion of the deepest interest and suggestion, but unfortunately these introductions had perforce to be made against time. A message was soon brought to the waiting-room stating that the Hall was packed to suffocation, and that the striking of the eight bells was imminent.

The platform could only be reached, it appeared, by a walk up the whole length of the Hall, and this being the case, and also in view of the dubious reception which the "Holy Father's" monastic dress might bring him, Mr. Bradlaugh pressed the Monk to take his arm, in order that he might have the advantage of a presidential escort.

Father Ignatius could not help smiling at the ludicrous incongruity of a Benedictine Abbot making his entry arm in arm with the champion of Unbelief, but he was too courteous to express unwillingness to accept the friendly offer, so the procession for the platform moved forward, having at its head this curiously linked pair.

"Just picture to yourself," says the Father, "how inexpressibly funny we must have looked! On the one hand, my dear friend Bradlaugh, a fine typical John Bull of an Englishman, and on the other, holding his arm (and my Bible) a poor little shrimp of a Monk. I wonder that the whole Hall did not burst out laughing, but we were cheered lustily from one end to the other."

I shall now exchange the Reverend Father's own personal impressions of this extraordinary scene, for those of a friend who was present, and has since given me a word-sketch of the proceedings.

Seats and standing-room were alike packed when Mr. Bradlaugh ushered in the guest of the evening, and Mr. Holyoake in a few terse phrases explained his identity and the purport of his presence in their midst. The audience was strangely heterogeneous—perhaps a representative one—for its mental range reached from the keenest intellect and astute knowledge, to the plane of ignorance known only to the slum ruffian and virago. In the body of the Hall sat

some of the leading lights of Reason, Rationalism, and the *fine fleur* of Modern Philosophy. In the gallery and farther back in the arena, the types were lower and more varied. Bonnetless and ragged women, with arms and necks unblushingly bared, were present in considerable numbers, and in some instances this exhibition of degraded womanhood was unspeakably distressing, so much so that it affected the Reverend Father far more powerfully than the sea of brutal men's faces which met him on all sides, as he stepped forward to speak his first word.

That first word was a prayer! "I cannot speak to you," said he, addressing the breathless assembly, "until I have spoken to my Master," and at the sound of his voice a great hush fell upon the Hall—a hush which Mr. Bradlaugh evidently interpreted, for he broke in hastily. "No prayers, if you please, Holy Father. They will never give you a hearing if you begin to pray." But the Monk stood his ground. Turning to the Chairman, he asked him if he would kindly put the matter to the general vote. He (the Monk) had been promised one hour's absolute licence of speech. Was he, in the eyes of his audience, stepping outside this convention in speaking a prayer of very brief duration? Mr. Holyoake referred the question as requested directing a show of hands from all who should concur in the "Holy Father's" wish. A moment's silence ensued—then the vote was unanimous, and the prayer was prayed—such a prayer as Father Ignatius *can* extemporise, when moved by some powerful motive to spontaneous speech with God. By the time the Amen was reached the speaker's foothold was assured.

The oration followed. Those who had looked forward to an elaborate rhapsody round a text chosen for its doctrinal richness, must have been disappointed at the outset, and there is little doubt that the "Holy Father's" opening phrases fell as more or less of a shock upon his expectant listeners. They had looked for a stereotyped religious, whose garments should be sickly with the odour of sanctity, and they saw in his stead a genial refined Englishman, who

evinced no intention of pulling dogma off the reel, still less of creating an impression that his own intellect had derived its nourishment from a diet of asses' milk.

Father Ignatius approached his argument by touching straightway on its core. Ignoring precedent, he gave out no text or Bible reference, but enunciated the Name of Jesus as the basis on which he intended to build his Capitol. Just the two syllables, "Jesus," as a prelude to the mighty question, "Who and What was this Incarnate Being, the Jesus whose Name has covered the earth as the waters cover the sea?"

The oration was one which appealed powerfully to the head as well as the heart. It may be described as a superb *Ecce Homo* in word portraiture. The whole gist of the Monk's eloquence bore down upon this one consummation—Behold the Man, the Desired of all the Nations, the superhuman Figure towards which the combined fingers of History and Prophecy have pointed backwards and forwards, from all ages, and every corner of the earth. Jesus, the Cynosure of a waiting world's converged aspiration, the One and Only, whose advent Confucius, Zoroaster, and the immortal writers of Greece and Rome had unanimously foreshadowed as that of Messiah Incarnate—the God-Man.

After quoting and comparing some of the most salient points in these ancient prophecies, the speaker dwelt with much emphasis on the nationality of the Expected Conqueror of the world—Jesus the Jew. Geographically as well as historically, this point of the Messianic Evolution spelt vivid interest. Palestine represented upon the map the eastern boundary of civilisation. It might almost be called the junction of Occident and Orient, being central between the two—a significant detail, inasmuch as the Western prophecies pointed eastward, and those of the East westward, their fulfilment being reserved for the Land which lay forgotten, but midway betwixt the two.

It was conventional, continued the Father, as well as historically correct, to call the Jews the Chosen People. Since the creation of Time, they had been reserved for a

supreme Purpose and Privilege. Their very *raison-d'être* lay in their predestination. They were to be mediumistic in the production of the Deliverer who should be born upon the earth. In other words, through the Jews, Prophecy was to be merged into History, Faith into Sight, Darkness into Perfect Day.

But how? Very simply! By the appearance of a poor little Jew baby, whose birth, its locality, object, and approximate period, had been whispered by every wind under Heaven, ever since the Divine Gifts of Prophecy and Intelligent Deduction had been breathed upon the world. Jesus, the Jew-Child of Bethlehem, was the living Answer to the Pantheistic Problem of the Mystic East, and the Key to the Enigma of the Polytheistic West.

What an almighty rebuff to the combined anticipations of Magnificent Man, that the wheel of Supernal Destiny should be so set, that the embodiment of Omnipotence, the Consummation of the World's Vigil, was to be delegated to a stable-born Jew!

Yet this same Jesus was a logically and clearly proven Personality. No Myth, no abstract Creation, but the Monumental Centrepiece of all History, the Master of Time and Eternity, whose tangible Identity could be approached and touched through every channel of human learning and inspiration. Mountains might be moved, or the waves of the sea be reversed, but the Name of Jesus in its Historical Supremacy would never be otherwise than Absolute—the same Yesterday, To-day, and For Ever.

This assertion was the top-stone of a most carefully graduated progression. Of rock and mortar only—facts with their accompaniment of proof—was the Monk's discourse composed. And when, as the climax, he asked his audience to view this simple erection through the lens of the average intelligence, they were fain to recognise a masterpiece of word-building which had resulted in a tower of theoretical strength.

By this time Father Ignatius carried the whole Hall with him, and when, in concluding his address, he lowered

his standard to the level of the human heart, and presented this Precious Jew Baby as the Free Gift of God, a subdued emotion seemed to seize the huge assembly, while many a tear was shed, by those who but an hour before had laughed to think what a sorry figure the Monk was likely to cut.

One of the audience has told me that from Mr. Bradlaugh's downwards, the faces turned upon the preacher during the last ten minutes of his discourse were vivid and conflicting studies of temperament under the microscope.

Without modulation, the Reverend Father suddenly changed his key. Dropping abruptly from the classical heights to which he had hitherto restricted his argument, he wound up with a soul-to-soul finale based on the Presence of Jesus at that moment in their midst.

Three hundred and seventy years, said the Father, before the fulfilment of the Messianic Promise, Antiochus Epiphanes devastated the Temple of Jerusalem, and penetrated sacrilegiously into the Holy of Holies, whose threshold none but the High Priest dared to cross. Antiochus had heard of the Majesty of the God of Israel, and he thirsted to violate this sacerdotal barrier, in order to see for himself under what stupendous shape this Presence should be declared. Tearing aside the Sacred Veil, he plunged into the Mystery that lay beyond it. What did he see? A small empty room—nothing more! Neither by clouds nor thunderings did Jehovah reveal Himself to the pagan Roman, yet the atmosphere was obsessed with His Presence—the Presence that was unseen and unheard, and as yet unconceived by the heart of man.

It was very nearly two thousand years since any mortal had looked upon or spoken with Jesus, save in rare instances of ecstatic vision. Yet in that long vista of time, there had not been a single hour when His Name had ceased to be spoken, or the sense of His Presence lifted. Willingly or unwillingly, the world was saturated with Jesus, and Humanity depended helplessly on the tokens of His Presence.

What were the tokens of this Presence in the Hall of Science that evening? The spell of silence that lay upon his dear listeners, the expression of their faces, the tears that were in their eyes. They had (most of them) come there with the intention of breaking roughly into the Holy of Holies, and they had met the Babe of Bethlehem in the empty chamber of their own weary hearts. He had only one more word to say to them, and it was “Jesus.” As the Name left his lips, the clock sounded, and the Monk quietly resumed his seat, in a silence which was succeeded by a burst of enthusiasm, which in itself was a revelation to the professors and students in the High School of Unbelief.

Mr. Bradlaugh's reply was the next item of interest—a most admirably worded production, which was innocent of any attempt to confute or even undermine the historical basis on which the “Holy Father” had laid the whole weight of his oratory. Mr. Bradlaugh raised no gauntlet. He sought to divert attention from the original air, by riveting it on a skilfully executed variation. Christianity was not only a superfluity, he argued, but a let and hindrance to the human race. The world would be better, because individually greater and freer, without it, in the intellectual sense of the term, which to his way of thinking was the most sublime sense of all. Jesus Christ and Modern Civilisation were irreconcilable antitheses, and the question for patriots to consider, was the relative benefit to be reaped by the country from one or other of these cults. For his own part, he should delight to see the Bible swept out of England for good and all; and to demonstrate this aspiration, the speaker laid hold of the Monk's Bible, which happened to be within reach, and flung it contemptuously across the table. This was the only jarring note in the whole evening's procedure, and the Reverend Father emphasised it, by rising and fervently kissing the Book which had been thus irreverently handled.

But the momentary shadow was not followed by others. The Member for Northampton closed his speech by courteously thanking the “Holy Father for an hour of superb

eloquence," and to this compliment the Monk responded, by a hearty tribute to the ability of Mr. Bradlaugh's own dissertation, which he described as "eminently clever, and delightfully wide of the mark."

This parting shot produced a broad smile which spread from platform to auditorium, and the meeting dispersed with a prolonged ovation for both speakers.

As the Reverend Father left the Hall of Science, the crowd outside cheered him to the echo, and he had the greatest difficulty in reaching his cab. "They wants the like of you here more often, sir," said a friendly policeman who assisted at his exit. "You'd soon do away with this 'ere show, *you* would!"

CHAPTER XLI

"THE WORLD KNOWETH US NOT"

" Called to leave father, mother,
And worldly wealth or fame,
To give up all for Jesus,
And glorify His Name."

CONSIDERING that Mr. Bradlaugh was heard to say, at Birmingham, "Father Ignatius is the only man whose influence I fear for my followers," he must have possessed an admirably generous personality to have supplemented the Monk's first appearance on his platform, with a cordial invitation to repeat his visit. Many and pathetic were the letters and messages which the Father received after that memorable evening in Old Street, St. Luke's. He had hoped that at least *one* long forgotten angel might have been recalled by some forlorn heart to tend and nurture the struggling little leaves his words had planted, but of a definite result in such an atmosphere he had scarcely realised the possibility. The incentive to persevere was a powerful one, and bearing in mind the distressing fact that St. Luke's Church was closed all the week, and tenantless, he decided to put the case before the Bishop, stating his own experience at the Hall of Science, and plainly asking his lordship of London to allow him to preach Jesus from this empty pulpit, to the derelict souls of the parish.

Dr. Jackson's answer is worthy a paragraph. Ignoring all reference to the spiritual aspect of the matter, he merely reminded the Monk that he was a suspended Deacon in the Metropolitan diocese, and that as he (the writer) did not feel constrained to withdraw this prohibitive order, it was

impossible for him to comply with "Mr. Lyne's" request. The Bishop was perfectly aware of the Monk's peculiar gifts as a preacher, and also of the very special blessing which had followed his Missions ever since he had raised his voice as a winner of souls. Yet rather than dispense one drop of Purple Ink, the door of God's house was kept sealed, and several thousand neglected sinners were deliberately thrust back from perhaps what was their last chance of finding the Saving Hand.

This act of official tyranny caused Father Ignatius profound and bitter pain. In 1873 he preached again in the Hall of Science, and with the same startling effect. But one familiar figure was missing on this occasion. Mr. Bradlaugh was a prisoner of the Carlists, and his absence was keenly regretted by the Monk, who had conceived a real affection for his gifted foe-friend. Nevertheless, there were many sidelights of compensation radiating from this second "Talk about Jesus" with the people that knew Him not. One poor woman crept close to the Reverend Father as he prepared to leave the Hall. "Oh, sir," she said tearfully, "I *must* tell you that your last sermon gave me back my husband! He was a terrible drunkard, and used to leave me and the children starving for days together. But now there isn't a better man living, and he says it is your words that did it!"

I cannot let the name of Charles Bradlaugh fade altogether from these pages, without adding, that when, eighteen years later, Father Ignatius heard of his friend's dangerous illness, his immediate impulse was to go to him, in the hope that even at the eleventh hour of life, God might send His servant with a message. But Death was beforehand with him, and consciousness had ceased, ere the Word of Peace could be spoken. It was ordained that no earthly intermediary should cast his shadow between the Lord and His great-souled prodigal.

A supreme consolation, and one of exquisite personal sweetness, came to soften the many rugged edges of the vicissitudes with which the chronicles of the early seventies

were heavily burdened. The Abbot's gentle and devoted mother had (to use his own expression) "found Salvation" at one of his Mission services! Mrs. Lyne, says the Reverend Father, had always been the most saintly of women, and a devout Christian, but it had hitherto been through the veil of faith only, that she had realised the nearness and dear-ness of a Personal Saviour. Now all was changed, suddenly and blessedly changed, and in the light of that transfiguration, her motherly love seemed if it were possible, deepened into an almost passionate veneration for the Monk-son who had shown her Jesus. From that moment, their relative positions seemed mysteriously reversed. The mother had given her child life, and that child had requited her by a similar but greater gift. He too had given her Life!

Henceforward her chief earthly interest seemed centred in Llanthony, the Father's Missions, and everything connected with his spiritual work. In spite of the fatigue which such an effort entailed on her never robust health, Mrs. Lyne followed her son on his Missions from city to city, and so far as she could do so without injustice to her other children, in widening his field of action, by giving him the means necessary for the striking out of more extensive enterprises. There are many beautiful gifts at this moment in the Abbey Church that owe their existence to the same generous benefactress, but it was not unnaturally on the Reverend Father's personal welfare and safety, that her motherly heart was chiefly set. It seemed as though she could scarcely suffer him out of her sight, when for preaching purposes he was obliged to face a crowd of strangers, friendly or the reverse.

No amount of argument could dissuade her from shadowing her "darling Monk," as she was wont to speak of him, among her friends. These at length likened her gentle persistency to that of the Blessed Mary, who, as the Bible tells us, was often to be seen "waiting without," among the followers of a dearly loved Son. On one occasion of which we shall speak in another paragraph, Mrs. Lyne's presence saved her Monk's life!

This reference brings us to the leading event of 1873—the famous trial in the Court of Chancery (detailed in the *Times* of July 26th), when Father Ignatius, having been accused of “kidnapping a ward,” was called upon to produce the person of the infant in question, and deliver him over to his parents. For those who may not have an opportunity of glancing over the file, I will outline the case in brief.

A certain youth, having chanced to hear the Reverend Father preach in London, became impressed with the conviction that he himself possessed a vocation for the Cloister, and upon the strength of the “call” which he professed to have received, wrote to the Monk, asking for an interview. His request was granted, and the Reverend Father was favourably inclined towards the new aspirant, finding him to be a gentlemanly young man, and to all appearances earnest in his intention to “leave all” and “follow.” The boy’s home-life was evidently an unhappy one. His parents were well to do and worldly folk, and they had no sympathy with their son’s religious tendencies. On the contrary, his piety was subjected to a system of persecution which rendered him altogether miserable, and he begged the Reverend Father with urgent repetition to admit him to the Novitiate at his own Monastery. The Abbot temporised the matter by inviting the youth on a probationary visit to Llanthony, with the view of his becoming a Postulant and Novice, should he (the Superior) deem his vocation sincere and his health equal to the exigencies of the Rule.

It must be remembered that Father Ignatius is innately a “Monk of monks,” therefore it would have been absurd and inconsistent if he had advised the neophyte to set aside the Voice in his soul, and dedicate his earthly future either to commerce or one of the learned professions, for the sake of peace at home. There may be a division of opinion as to the equity of harbouring a runaway infant under a forbidden roof, even though it be a monastic one, but this is a many-sided argument, which is outside the narrator’s

province. In receiving this young man at Llanthony Abbey, and in keeping him there until legally compelled to surrender him to the Court, Father Ignatius acted according to his lights, and in obedience to a Great Unwritten Law, which in his estimation outweighs the amalgamated codes of the civilised world at large. Doubtless, if a similar instance came under his manipulation to-day, or ten years hence, not even a vision of the Vice-Chancellor's wig would induce him to place parental rule (a delegated authority) on a higher level than the Divine Command, which he believes to be absolute and paramount.

The Reverend Father therefore received the boy into his Monastery, whereupon a fiery correspondence ensued between those concerned in his immediate interests. The parents claimed their son, and declined to provide for his maintenance in the Benedictine Abbey, while the Reverend Father, on his side, declared his intention of testing the lad's vocation during a fair space of time. If, at its expiration, he should find the Postulant unfitted for Enclosure, he would despatch him to his home with an easy conscience; but if on the contrary, he judged his vocation to have developed and deepened, he should consider it his duty to encourage obedience in a soul which had received a direct call from God.

There was no reason to defer the Postulancy. Brother Aelred (as he became known at the Abbey) gave every promise of becoming a good and faithful Monk, and he himself entreated his parents to leave him in peace, and permit him to enjoy the happiness of the life which he had chosen of his own free will, and in the knowledge that his vocation was built upon a Rock which neither time nor persecution could assail.

Brother Aelred's father thought otherwise! After a storm of letters, and a vain attempt at personal persuasion of the most insidious kind, open warfare was resorted to. The sum of £200 was paid into the Court of Chancery, and a wardship established—a step which at once placed the Reverend Father on the wrong side of

the law, as the alleged "kidnapper" of the property of the Court.

The Monk was subjected to an intermediate series of demands and insults, which he met with a distinct refusal to accept or abide by any intimation received from sources other than official—that is to say, emanating direct from the High Court of Equity. This was an effectual way of nipping the objectionable system of writ-service by which he had been annoyed during the past few weeks, but it could not postpone or mitigate the crisis that was inevitable. The Press was beginning to get wind of the affair, while more than one kind friend had caught the whisper, and wrote to warn the Abbot of his own delicate position, *vis-à-vis* to the Iron Arm.

When the Court of Chancery finally "commanded" the Reverend Father to appear, with the infant ward, before Vice-Chancellor Malins, on a date and hour determined, the Monk promptly took his Bible and his Novice, and set forth down the Valley.

Brother Aelred had by this time been admitted to the first Novitiate, and he wore both habit and tonsure—a detail which did not escape the two Sheriff's officers who had been despatched upon the heels of the summons, and now met the Father and his companion half-way down the road to Llanfihangel Crucorney.

Whereupon an explanation ensued! The Abbot was taking his young Brother to London, in obedience to the signification he had received that morning. The officers had been sent to Llanthony in order to certify that the important document had both been accepted and understood by its recipient. So the Reverend Father suggested that "these gentlemen" should have the satisfaction of conducting him and his charge in person to London, and announced his own intention of catching the first train for town.

That journey was in many ways a painful one. Nevertheless, it had its quaint touches. The two Monks travelled in a reserved compartment with their official acquaintances,

who appeared much mystified when at a given moment the Breviaries were brought out, and the Office of the Hour was recited with quiet fervour. A more warlike note was supplied to the situation, by the newspaper placards which lined the intermediate stations of their route. The name of "Father Ignatius" figured on all sides, in conjunction with hysterical headings such as "Kidnapping by a Monk," "Father Ignatius and a ward of Chancery," "Startling revelations of Llanthony Abbey," and other sensational announcements set in a strident key.

Poor Brother Aelred was depressed and nervous. On arriving at Paddington, the Monk accompanied him in person to his parents' house, where under solemn protest he left him, pending the pleasure of the law. Before taking leave of his Novice, Father Ignatius blessed him affectionately in presence of his father and mother, who witnessed this valedictory ceremonial with an effervescent disgust, which they took small pains to conceal.

This done, the Reverend Father resumed his cab, and went on alone to his own quarters, there to prepare for and await the date of the coming trial.

For the sake of brevity, it is necessary to summarise this important event into a very casual and incomplete digest. I need not underline the poignant anxiety which it aroused in the Monk's immediate family, and among the many friends who knew that the occasion would be joyfully seized as an opportunity for a public demonstration against monasticism and its resurrector, in a country where even its ashes were held accursed.

"I felt sure that the day of my dear Monk's martyrdom had come," wrote poor Mrs. Lyne, when recounting the scene outside the Court to an intimate friend. Unfortunately, no power of persuasion could persuade this agonised mother to absent herself from following her son, even into the thick of the fight. Hearing of her intention to be present at the trial, the Vice-Chancellor most kindly put his own private room at her disposal, and thither, with one of her daughters, she repaired, in the lull that preceded the

opening of the tribunal. Mr. Lyne elected to appear at the side of the religious, whom he accompanied both to and from the Court.

The interior was crammed to suffocation. Every wig and gown in England seemed to have turned up for the occasion, but the concourse within doors was nothing to the mob which had gradually been gathering at the entrance, and far down the thoroughfares leading to the Court, for several hours before the approach of the Monk could reasonably be expected. As the cab containing himself and his father was hailed from afar, a chorus of groans and hisses smote the air, varied by counter-cries and cheers of encouragement, from the more friendly portion of the crowd. Beyond a phenomenal exercise of lung-power, the outside circle showed no signs of active aggression, as the vehicle drew up at the door, and the Reverend Father with Mr. Lyne alighted, and passed quickly out of sight. The passion of the hour was reserved until the announcement of the verdict should break its slender rein.

That verdict was a foregone conclusion! Father Ignatius had no reason to complain of discourtesy on the part of the Vice-Chancellor, but from the outset, the case was firmly held within the limitations of a breach of national law, no attention whatsoever being paid to any other or higher suggestions with which the matter might have become involved. In the eyes of the Court, the Reverend Father was merely a certain "Mr. Lyne," who had detained a legal infant and ward of Chancery in his house, against the wishes of his parents, and in spite of several enlightening warnings, official and otherwise.

The Reverend Father's defence was very simple, and only what must have been expected from the creator of Llanthony, and a man of strong and uncompromising conviction. "He had never," said he, "sought the acquaintance of the young man in question, who had come to him as an utter stranger, for the purpose of seeking admission to his Order. That admission he had granted conditionally, on the prescribed proviso that the applicant should prove a

suitable subject for the Cloister. He did not consider that it could be fairly stated that he had shown any scant respect to the law of the land. On the contrary, his own initiative had been the best proof of his obedience to that law. His sole reply to the summons he had received from the Court, was to start immediately for London, bringing his Novice with him. With regard to his own moral right in the first instance, to retain the boy under his roof, and pass him into the Novitiate, notwithstanding parental protest, he considered it to be beyond—because above—justification. There were two codes of legislation current in the world, two conflicting standards of duty—the Law of Jesus Christ, and the law of man. As Superior of a religious House, it was his duty to encourage, not to repudiate, those who aspired to the life which he believed to be the nearest approach to Gospel Perfection upon earth, if lived in its ideal spirituality. This duty he had fulfilled!"

That such a point of view spelt double Dutch to the learned Court, was evident from the mild discussion which followed between Vice-Chancellor and defendant, as to the ultimate utility of Anglo-Monastic Liberty, and the benefit or danger to be anticipated from its toleration as an under-current of national expression.

Whereupon the Monk would have waxed eloquent, had not his opponent evinced a marked distaste for a tilt between Wig and Tonsure, and deliberately closed the proceedings upon the plea of his original platitude.

The Reverend Father was called upon to desist from all further communication with the ward of the Court, and officially warned that any infringement of this injunction would be considered contumacious, and render him liable to grave measures of restraint. With that, the case was dismissed.

The Red Tape barrier once dissolved, Father Ignatius was accosted by several of the barristers present, who appeared to be deeply interested in the case. By the time that he rejoined his family in the Vice-Chancellor's room,

the news of the verdict had already reached the crowd outside, and a distant but ominous roar of applause could distinctly be heard, followed by a prolonged volley of hisses and groans, which boded ill for the person in whose intention they were uttered. Poor Mrs. Lyne's nerves had already suffered too much during the painful debate, to be able to endure this fresh terror. In vain did her husband and son beseech her to go quietly away with her daughter by a side exit, and without betraying her identity. Nothing would induce her to leave the Monk's side, even though she knew his father to be with him, and must have realised the futility of a woman's presence in the midst of a howling mob.

The Court had by this time emptied. Brother Aelred had been driven away under his father's escort, amid a salvo of deafening cheers, and it now only remained for the Monk and his family to complete the list of interesting departures. Leaving Mrs. Lyne to her daughter's care, Mr. Lyne sought to hurry his son as quietly as possible into the cab that was awaiting them, under the auspices of a stalwart policeman, but no sooner did they appear, than the fury of the rabble broke loose, and a scene ensued which can only be recorded as a cowardly and brutal outrage. Yells and epithets, too blasphemous for repetition, hailed down on all sides, accompanied by an avalanche of mud, thrown by those near enough to aim with effect at the Father's person. Some even sprang forward and spat upon him, as he came their way; and one man more blind with passion than the rest, rushed to meet him with a stone in his hand. "We'll get rid of you and your Jesus Only," he said, raising it to aim full at his victim's face; but the blow was never dealt. At that instant a woman's cry was heard, and two trembling hands caught the ruffian's arm. It was Mrs. Lyne. "Don't hurt him!" she said gently. "Oh, don't hurt him! He would not harm one of you for the world."

And at the sound of her voice, the touch of her hand, and above all, the sight of her sweet delicate face, a great

rush of shame overcame the mob, and the whole sway of humanity fell back on either side, to see the man drop his stone and slink away abashed and silenced.

That momentous intervention saved the Monk's life! In the presence of magical motherhood, the storm of tongues died down, and father and son were suffered to depart in peace—the peace created by the little hand of one weak woman. As Father Ignatius drove away, the Press reports inform us that "he distributed a shower of 'tracts' through the cab windows."

The sequel to this disgraceful demonstration was a vehement protest from the pen of Mr. Lyne, who in the columns of a leading "daily" declaimed loudly against the treatment to which his son and himself had been subjected at the hands of the British public. The Reverend Father, on the contrary, abstained from retaliation. He returned immediately to Llanthony, where he was received with the most heartfelt rejoicing on the part of his anxious Brothers. The little Community came forth to welcome their Abbot with banners, incense, and cross-bearer, and conducted him in state from the farthest point of Enclosure, right up to the Abbey threshold. All were sad to see him return without Brother Aelred, but this sentiment was softened by the confidence they all felt in the Novice's love for the life monastic. "He will come back," said they, "when the laws of man can no longer restrain him." And as intercessory to this end, prayers were offered for him daily, and his empty stall was adorned with flowers.

Needless to say, this dream was never realised. Moral pressure at home, and the subtlety of worldly contact, did their work. When Brother Aelred's minority had turned down its last page, it was not to his spiritual mountain-home that he turned his steps. His vocation was gone like a breath upon the mirror, and he finally posed in life as an advocate at the Scottish Bar.

There are several wayside incidents, connected with the Father's story about this time, which are worth recording as introspective glimpses of his individual personality. No

one was more proud of his gifts and the notoriety which haloed his name, than his own mother, and perhaps no one really influenced him so strongly—in things unmonastic—as she did. Society even in those days loved “lions,” and Mrs. Lyne could testify to this fact more than most, inasmuch as she was continually bombarded with entreaties that she would induce her son to accept certain invitations, which were entrusted to her for transmission. One of these was from Mrs. Vaughan, the wife of the Master of the Temple, and herself a member of the Leycester family. A monster “At Home” was to be given to the clergy of all denominations at the Temple, and the gathering was to be a specially interesting one, for the reason that some distinguished Parsees and Hindoos, then in London, had promised to be present. Would Mrs. Lyne prevail upon Father Ignatius to “look in,” if only for a little while? It would be conferring a general pleasure, and as the company was to be mostly clerical, his presence could not be uncharitably construed.

This was the gist of Mrs. Vaughan’s request, and Mrs. Lyne, though very doubtful of success, promised to lay the case before the Reverend Father, who was at that moment in London.

At the outset, the Monk was not to be approached on the subject. “It would be most unmonastic for a Benedictine to appear at any social function,” said he, “and he could not possibly go.” However, after some urgent representation on his mother’s part, that the occasion was more of a clerical *réunion* than anything else, he finally promised to put in a brief appearance, on condition *that he might say and do what he liked!* This permission Mrs. Vaughan only too gladly accorded, and when the day and hour arrived, the Monk was faithful to his promise, and his remarkable head and habit might be seen threading their way through the heterogeneous mazes of “cloth” with which the spacious salons of the Temple were crowded.

Mrs. Vaughan, in her double distinction of Dean Stanley’s sister and the wife of an important Church dignitary, had unlimited opportunity of making her “At Homes” the

rendezvous of every available celebrity of the ecclesiastical world. Her hospitality was of the large-minded order which brings together opinions from the conglomerate schools of all sorts and conditions of thought. Therefore her drawing-room was always full of clever people, and a show of "lions" was considered a foregone certainty.

This being the case, Father Ignatius had no difficulty in finding sympathetic companionship amongst his fellow-guests, both within the clerical pale and beyond it. Two young men, in especial, attracted his interest. One was a Mahomedan, the other a Hindoo, and both had come to England to complete their education at the University. The conversation drifted after a time, to the subject of Christian Missions in far-away lands, and the Reverend Father was much pained to note the evident scepticism with which his new friends viewed these magnificent enterprises of carrying the Cross to the remote ends of the earth. "How could outsiders," argued the Hindoo, "be expected to accept or venerate a religion, whose professing teachers were known to be in perpetual conflict over its fundamental principles?" And the Mahomedan was of the same mind. "If Christianity," said he, "was ever to become the universal propaganda which its administrators hoped for, Christians themselves would have to become unanimous in their articles of belief."

This double-barrelled misapprehension of so important a matter, left the zealous Father no choice but to "up and speak." "Gentlemen," he said quietly, "allow me to assure you that you are both making a very grievous mistake. We Christian clergy may differ slightly in our modes of administering our religion, but in our Faith—the Faith of Jesus Christ—we are emphatically and unreservedly *one*. Will you allow me to prove to you now, in this very drawing-room, that Christian unanimity is a strength wholly independent of sect or minor personal opinion?"

Both Orientals having expressed their willingness to be enlightened, Father Ignatius begged them to follow him. Approaching a table, round which was seated a group of

men well known to be representative of practically opposing denominations, orthodox or otherwise, he courteously asked this typical circle if, for the benefit of two young friends, he might ask a simple question. "Most certainly," "Pray do, Father Ignatius," and "Won't you come and sit down?" were amongst the answers evoked by this unlooked-for proposition, and a space was rapidly cleared by which the Monk was enabled to stand in their midst.

"Brothers in Christ," he said earnestly, "is there any *one* amongst you who believes in another salvation than the Supreme Salvation through the Precious Blood of Jesus?" "No, of course not!" was the cry from every lip. "Then will you all kneel down with me, while I ask Our Lord to increase our faith in that Precious Blood?" "Yes," with pleasure," came the answer; and in another instant they were all upon their knees, while the Father offered one of those rare prayers of his, which always seem to lessen the distance between this earth and beyond the stars.

When they rose from their knees, it was evidently with a solemn sense of the Divine Presence in their midst, for the eyes of both Mahomedan and Hindoo were moist with tears. Turning to them, the Monk gently said, "*That* is *our* religion!" and with these words he passed out of the room, and left the house.

This incident created a vivid impression at the time. I revive it as a characteristic touch of an individuality which owes not the least remarkable of its attributes, to a certain power of dignifying the impossible, by unsophisticated and childlike methods.

CHAPTER XLII

“THE GOD THAT DOEST WONDERS”

“Yes, like a fountain, Precious Jesus !
Make me and let me be.
Keep me and use me daily, Jesus,
For Thee, for only Thee.”

AN interesting feature of the earlier seventies, was the Monk's miraculous escape from death by poison—the fateful draught being unconsciously administered to him by the hand of a devout and well-intentioned Nun.

During one of his provincial Missions, the Reverend Father, hearing of the proximity of an interesting and widely known religious Settlement, expressed a wish to visit it before leaving the neighbourhood. He was very courteously received by the Guest-Mistress, who seemed to take special pleasure in doing the honours to an Anglican celebrity, of whom report said such conflicting and strange things.

Unfortunately however, the visit was destined to be one of adventure rather than edification. Before it was over, the Monk was seized with one of the alarming attacks of faintness to which he has always been subject from boyhood, and it became necessary to fetch him some brandy. This medicament the kind Guest-Mistress hastened to procure, and returning a moment later, she handed over to the Brother who had accompanied the Reverend Father, a wine-glass about three parts filled with a fluid which to all appearance was what it purported to be—Cognac.

The Monk swallowed his dose promptly, and after a short time the stimulant seemed to have produced the required effect, for he rallied sufficiently to ask his Brother

what on earth he had given him to drink. "Only a little brandy," was the respectful answer; but the patient appeared unconvinced. "It was *not* brandy," he said decisively, "but something dreadfully bitter." Then the frightened Nun looked aghast at the empty glass, and every vestige of colour left her face. "I have given you embrocation by mistake!" she exclaimed brokenly. "I must have taken the wrong bottle from our medicine-shelf. This is embrocation, and there is enough laudanum in it to kill twenty people!"

The poor woman's terror was pitiful to witness, and in the shock of the moment no one seemed to remember the vital importance of seeking immediate medical assistance.

Both the Nun and the Brother were panic-stricken, while the Monk's natural impulse was to review his desperate situation, and place himself unreservedly in the hands of God. A most solemn interim ensued. The innocent perpetrator of this disastrous deed expected sooner or later to see her victim die before her eyes, and her anguish increased with every moment. The Reverend Father was the only calm one there, for he trusted implicitly in the Divine Overshadowing which he felt convinced would safeguard him equally in life or death. And thus they waited anxiously and prayerfully, until the All Wise Will should be manifested.

It was only after a reasonable time had passed, that the Father spoke his mind, and even then it was very reverently and humbly that he told his companions of God's marvellous interposition on his behalf.

"Not only," said he, "has that deadly draught done me no harm, but it has been allowed to do me good. I feel perfectly well. All trace of faintness has passed. Let us forget our fears, and return thanks to our Lord."

This escape from death is no fiction. The bottle was carefully identified as containing poison, and the dose swallowed, sufficient to have carried destruction to a score of healthy adults.

Another striking example of the miraculous atmosphere which from time to time has enveloped the Monk's life,

occurred in the August of 1873, during the building of the Abbey Church. A part of the structure was then in hand, which necessitated the raising of heavy crates of stones to a height of some sixteen feet—a very dangerous but inevitable measure. These crates, which contained enormous weights of stones, were slung upwards by means of pulleys, and the greatest care was exercised among the workmen, to ensure the safe delivery of their unwieldy cargoes on the lofty scaffolding above.

One day—a day to be remembered—a catastrophe happened. In spite of every precaution, one of the crates overbalanced, just as its ascent was almost completed, and its entire contents were hurled upon an unfortunate man who was standing underneath working at the pulleys. There can be no need to dilate upon the effect of this overwhelming avalanche, on the skull and frame of one somewhat elderly human being.

Only last summer I was speaking with a man who was actually present when this accident took place, and although I questioned him to the very quick, and strove in every way to give him the lead towards contradicting his own statements, I am bound to admit that he never once shifted his ground by a hair's breadth. On the contrary, he told his story from first to last, with a simple conviction and accuracy which admitted of no misinterpretation.

The unfortunate man on whom the crate disgorged its tremendous contents, was crushed to death, and when unearthed from his self-piled monument, his poor body resembled a distorted "mass of pulp" more than anything else. I recall these details in the witness's original words. It was recreation-time at the Monastery, and both the Abbot and his Monks happened to be in the garden. They heard the crash of the falling stones, and came running towards the Church, knowing only too well what that ominous sound must mean. Before they could reach the spot, the workmen had already extricated the body of their unfortunate comrade, and had carried it out of the Church.

The spectacle was a ghastly one. Nevertheless, it was their duty to summon the Superior. So the news was borne to him by pale lips, and it met him, just as he and the Brothers were hurrying to the place where they knew that some deadly peril must already have preceded them. "A workman has been killed!—crushed to death by the weight of the crate. He is lying out yonder."

And "yonder" the Abbot went. Not till this juncture in the story, does the Reverend Father's testimony intervene. When he reached the scene of action, the remains of the victim were stretched upon the ground, and presented precisely the hopelessly disfigured appearance which I have before noted upon the evidence of my first witness.

There must have been a strange premonition in the Monk's soul when he received that sad summons to "come and see." He has assured me, that by the same inward Voice which had already whispered Its commands more than once, or even thrice in his life, he knew that his Master was about to call on him to deliver a message of Resurrection in the name of the Lord of Life.

"One moment, and I will be back," he said, in response to those who begged he would hurry to the spot. And in that moment he had run to his cell and possessed himself of the bottle of Lourdes water which he kept there; for he knew full well what was before him, and what manner of means he was to employ for the working out of his Master's mysteries.

As the Reverend Father approached, the circle round the dead man stood respectfully back, and he found himself face to face with the Silence which is unlike all others, for it embodies the suspended breath of two separate worlds.

The Monk had come there to act, not to pray. He was at that crucial moment no more the mere suppliant before God, but His active and irresponsible instrument. Kneeling by the corpse, he sprinkled it with the water of healing, speaking slowly and emphatically the command to arise in the name of Jesus Christ.

Then, without time or warning, the miracle was accomplished. One single and mighty thrill seemed to sweep through every fibre of the shattered frame, and the next instant the man rose and stood upon his feet. Not the crushed, pitiful object that but a moment before had been the cynosure of every shuddering look, but the same hale and whole man who had come that morning to his day's work, the same healthy Britisher, who an instant later, and in unbroken silence, walked a mile to his lodgings, without as much as a bruise or scratch to testify to the awful experience through which he had so recently passed. No one seemed to *dare* to follow him.

There was one interesting question which I could not fail to ask. "What had been the risen man's own version of his sensations during the lapse of time recorded between the falling of the stones and his 'call' back to this life?" And the answers given me both by the Reverend Father and my workman-witness were the same. The man had been absolutely silent. He seemed to have returned from oblivion. His flight back into the world had obliterated superhuman memories, and he had unconsciously submitted to an unexplained Law which prohibits those who have recrossed the Great Afar from breathing secrets fitted only for the ears of immortality, and which St. Paul declares "it is unlawful for a man to utter." This is a note needing reflection. From our Lord Jesus Christ downwards, we have no Biblical instance of resurrected persons carrying tidings from the Land of Souls. Lazarus, the widow's son, and Jairus' daughter, all came back in silence—the silence of Divine Intention, whose faint echo had sealed even the humble lip of the poor labourer in the Welsh hills.

The above event is not the only instance of miracle wrought by the sprinkling of Lourdes water during the Monk's career. Some years later, when staying in an isolated part of the country, an agonised mother sent to Father Ignatius, begging that he would come and see her son, who was lying sick unto death some five miles away. It was a singular appeal, emanating as it did from a faith-

ful member of the Roman Communion ; but the Reverend Father's Christianity being of the large-minded sort, he set forth at once, accompanied by a young friend just returned from sea, and bearing with him the water from the sacred Grotto. On his way to the cottage, the purpose of his errand was inwardly revealed to him. "Baby," he said, turning to the young sailor, whom from his earliest years he had always called by that name, "let us make haste. I believe Our Lord intends that I should raise up this poor boy by the power of His Name."

On arriving at their destination, after a rough walk of nearly two hours, the Monk passed at once into the sick-room. The boy, who was dying of acute internal inflammation, following an attack of typhoid, was to all appearance *in extremis*. He was past speech or hearing, and life was evidently at a very low ebb. But the Reverend Father did not lose heart. Going to the bedside, he bent over the lad and called him by his name, sprinkling him as he did so with some drops of the wondrous water. "Jesus Christ says you are to get up," he added deliberately ; and with these words his mission ended. *The boy rose at once, perfectly cured.*

The very next day, he walked the five miles lying between his own home and the place where the Reverend Father was then staying. What was more, he carried with him a whole load of flowers for the Monk's altar.

I have had the satisfaction of meeting the owner of this far-away cottage, and of hearing from her own lips the details of this remarkable case, and the unimpeachable validity of the cure recorded, as wrought upon her very near relation.

In 1876 the Reverend Father's feelings received a severe shock. He learnt from friends in Norwich that the fraudulent usurper of his own freehold property (Elm Hill Priory), not content with selling it to a lady who happened to be under his spiritual control, had likewise sub-let it to a Baptist preacher of the female persuasion, for "religious purposes."

This unlooked-for news revived the Monk's never really healed wounds, and he wrote an indignant protest, not only to the man who had so basely robbed him of the first-fruits of his labours, but also to the unsuspecting tenant who proposed to preach the Word of God in a building which she had no possible right to occupy. It is but just to add that the subsequent action of this would-be tenant, was a refreshing proof of the large-minded Christianity which not unfrequently goes arm in arm with the Dissent at which Church-folk are far too apt to rail, or turn up the nose of orthodoxy.

The Catholic Monk's appeal found favour in the eyes of this honest little Nonconformist, who after expressing her conviction of the validity of his claims, withdrew her own, and quietly sought other pastures for the folding of her flock.

It is to be lamented that the aggressor-in-chief was not moved to follow so just a lead; but on the contrary, this well-deserved rebuff seemed only to be an incentive to further and still graver outrage. Under his direction, the *soi-disant* proprietress of the Monastery advertised the buildings (inclusive of the large new chapel) for sale, in the public market. A purchaser soon presented himself, in the person of a certain local upholsterer, who bid for the premises with the intention of converting them into store-houses for his articles of furniture.

After a fiery correspondence with this individual, pointing out the sacrilege involved in the degradation of a religious House to a commercial workshop, Father Ignatius replaced expostulation with action. He resolved to go in person to Norwich and take possession of his Priory! He knew that the sympathy of the working-classes of the town was with him, and even if this had not been the case, he would have gone single-handed, to rescue his rightful property by storm.

One fine morning, the astonished city awoke to the fact that their old friend the Monk, together with one or two of his Brothers, was installed in his Elm Hill quarters, while a

poster placarded at the entrance, announced his presence and its purpose in unmistakably bold capitals. This "Mission" was perhaps one of the most remarkable in this whole biography, and the good natives of Norwich literally palpitated with expectation and conjecture. A great many were mystified to know how an entrance to the premises had been effected, but it was an open secret that more than one devoted Tertiary dwelt in close proximity to the desolated Priory, who would be more than ready to lend a helping hand should occasion require it, and it was not difficult to identify the direction from whence the support came. As a matter of fact, no one had removed the barricades of wood with which the doors were carefully safeguarded from intruders, save the Superior in person. He would not permit any one else to incur the legal risk attached to such an initiative. A friendly carpenter was called upon to loosen a few nails here and there, but the actual removal of the barriers, was the work of one pair of hands—the Reverend Father's.

In a very short space of time the long disused chapel had resumed at least a portion of its former Catholicity—that is to say, its altar was revested and readorned, some blue draperies disposed hastily around the walls, and a crucifix and candles placed before the Tabernacle containing the Consecrated Elements, which the Monk had not forgotten to bring with him. These simple arrangements concluded, the monastic routine was once more resumed, the Office being recited, together with special intercessions for the painful circumstances in which they were placed. It was thus that they waited the issue of events.

Meanwhile, in the town, a stormy division of opinion prevailed. The Father's resolute stand had taken every one by surprise, yet none the less, his arch-enemy was determined to avail himself of every loophole and quibble of the law, whereby he could proceed to the ejection of his only too popular adversary. It needed no seer to prophesy that should time be allowed to slip by, a formidable riot in the Monk's favour would be the next

feature of the entertainment. To make a long story short, a warrant was obtained in the name of the pretended "propietress," enjoining the Sheriff's officers to expulse the Reverend Father and his Brothers then and there from her property, either by gentle or coercive measures.

When these officers reached the Monastery, the Monks were assembled in choir, and at first no answer was vouchsafed to the knocks from without. But upon these being repeated somewhat peremptorily, a voice from within (the Superior's) asked who was there, and upon being called upon to open in the name of the law, he did so, at the same time begging the officers to remove their hats, as they were not only in a chapel, but standing before the Blessed Sacrament. This request being acceded to, Father Ignatius further explained that he and his Brothers were just then engaged in a very solemn service, and that he would be obliged if any business could be postponed for half an hour, when it would be concluded. After some demur, the men agreed to wait, and the Monk returned to his devotions, which were however seriously disturbed by the constant hammering of a carpenter whom the officers had brought with them, and who, at their instigation, had commenced readjusting and nailing up the wooden barriers on the doors.

I have no space to recount the somewhat intricate intermediary detail which preceded the final climax of this stormy morning's work. Its result must suffice for the needs of this volume. At the conclusion of the service, the writ of expulsion was handed and explained to the Reverend Father, who was called upon to leave the premises without further delay. The officers were already nervous of outside intervention from the townsfolk, and anxious to complete their "job" quickly, and without a scene. But the Monk was also determined to stand his ground valiantly, and an altercation threatened to ensue. The Father utterly refused to leave his church, unless expelled by main force.

This extreme measure was precipitated by a message

being delivered to one of the men, to the effect that a mob was on its way to support the Monks—an eventuality which had been foreseen by their persecutors with some uneasiness. To cut the danger short, the emissaries of "justice" had recourse to the right of might. Giving the Reverend Father but time to secure the Blessed Sacrament, which he held folded in the corporals, and reverently clasped to his breast, they made summary disposal of his person by seizing him bodily between them, and depositing him forcibly outside the monastic precincts.

The Superior's transportation involved that of his assistant Brothers, who followed in his wake, clinging to his robes. The Benedictine party (carrying their Precious Burden) retired to the adjoining house of a faithful Third Order member, where they were speedily joined by a continuous influx of enthusiastic and indignant sympathisers.

Only by dint of much logical reasoning, and still more by a direct appeal to the peace-making sensibility of a Monk and a preacher of the Gospel, could the magisterial and other official friends of the Reverend Father induce him to renounce all future intention of repeating his invasion of the much discussed Priory, which by every law of God and man he knew to be his own—bought indeed with the price of his own personal labour.

Even then, this supreme renunciation was made under solemn protest, and for the sake of public peace, in a centre which was ready to detonate into civil warfare, at the raising of his little finger.

There was no reason, nevertheless, why his proposed Mission should be abandoned, even if he could not preach it from the familiar corner of the old home of Elisha de Hague. The affection and enthusiasm of the Norwich people soon supplied the deficiency of a suitable locale. The proprietor of a popular inn—the Rampant Horse—offered him the hospitality of a balcony overlooking a commodious courtyard, and it was from this unconventional height that the Monk preached some of the most stirring

sermons of his life, to a congregation which for size and rapt attention recalled the old times of the "Saturday night collections," when the trays went round, and Dives and Lazarus alike, combined to make them heavy with the offerings of grateful hearts.

These addresses, which were alternated with others delivered on the Sunday at St. Andrew's Hall, completed the finale to a lamentable and disgraceful episode, which to this day is remembered in Norwich with lively interest by its many surviving eye-witnesses, and with bitter indignation by that special portion of the population, which still prides itself on its classification of "Ignatiusites."

There were several warcries sounded in the Reverend Father's life before the decade of the crowded seventies had told its many tales. In the same year as the "descent on Norwich," we are confronted with the Monk's encounter with the Vicar of St. Mary's, Scarborough, on the occasion of the latter's invitation to the Dean of Westminster to occupy the pulpit of the parish church, dedicated to the Virgin Mother.

Father Ignatius and the popular Dean, albeit kinsmen, were as wide apart in religious sympathy as two men who professed to worship an identical God could possibly be. "My cousin, Father Ignatius," the Dean was fond of saying, "is about the last primitive Christian left on earth;" while the Monk's summary of his distinguished relative's attitude as an ecclesiastic in the National Church, was no less decisive though scarcely as flattering. The Dean made no secret of his rationalistic views concerning one of the vital pillars of the Creed of Christendom—the resurrection of the body—and it was impossible for the Reverend Father to be aware of this defection without pursuing it to the bitter end. That any professing teacher in the Church, should question whether the risen Jesus was the revived Flesh which in Its Human Nature lay for three days in the faithful Arimathean's garden-sepulchre, was a tacit blasphemy which he could not tolerate. Such a man, he argued, was no more fit to preside at an Anglican Deanery than avowed unbelievers like Colenso,

Voysey, or Stopford Brooke, only *one* of whom had been excommunicated, while the others, either by honest conviction or official suggestion, had had the decency to leave a Communion whose Creed they repudiated.

The invitation, therefore, of Archdeacon Blunt, which placed the pulpit of an important parish at the disposal of a semi-infidel, was in the Father's eyes a terrible act of collusion which called for immediate challenge. There were three people implicated, the Diocesan, the Dean, and the Archdeacon, and to the first and last of them, the Monk penned a respectful but plainly worded expostulation, setting forth the glaring incongruity and spiritual offence, which surrounded the step in contemplation.

These letters contained no exaggerated personal theories. They were based upon the Dean's own publicly expressed opinions, and culminated in the one pertinent inquiry, "Was it not a direct insult to Almighty God, to offer the parish pulpit to a preacher who openly denied the vital truth of His Son's Resurrection?"

But on this occasion, as on countless others, Father Ignatius had to realise that "spiritual wickedness in high places" is not to be reached by the admonitory pen. His intervention was disregarded, whereupon he resolved to cross swords at close quarters. The Archbishop of York (Dr. Thompson) had already, some years back, given the Monk ample proof of his antipathy for monasticism; therefore his present attitude of official somnolence, was no shock to the man who with all deference, had sought to prick him into action—the action of a faithful delegate of Divine Authority in the land.

The same date that saw Dean Stanley at Scarborough found the Monk of Llanthony in the same city. The Dean was announced to preach at the parish church and at the Spa Saloon, while the Reverend Father was to speak at the Theatre Royal. Placards were posted on all the hoardings of the town, and the local papers were provided with advertisements dealing with his appearance and its cause—"Dean Stanley in the Parish Church." This

Mission and the impression it created, may not inaptly be termed the first of the many black-and-blue bruises, which the name of Father Ignatius has left like indelible finger-marks upon the history of condoned infidelity in the English Church.

The Reverend Father was joined at Scarborough by Mr. and Mrs. Lyne, one of his own sisters, and Lady Frances Hamilton—the last a faithful friend, who had received the Light a short time previously at the Monk's hands, and whose name both as benefactress and sympathiser, is very dear to Llanthony.

It would be almost impossible to describe the absolute upheaval, caused by the Father's plain-spoken appeal to the Christianity of Scarborough. While the Dean of Westminster was telling the congregation of St. Mary's that "the Church of England would remain the National Church only so long as she taught what the English People chose for her to teach," the Monk was filling his theatre with the same strange magnetism, that nearly four hundred years back had crowded the deserted Florentine Duomo, with a breathless tear-stained multitude.

Except for the colour of his robes, it might have been the reincarnation of the Frate Predicatore of Ferrara who delivered his message of warning and denunciation, to the people of Scarborough. Its effect was stupendous. A thrill of uneasy indignation passed through the heart of the city, for the words of the preacher fell like brands of fire, and they left the sear of conviction that scarred alike intellect and soul. Simple and ignorant, wise and erudite, they were swept off their feet by the elucidation of one small stubborn fact—the presence in their parish church of a man who openly gave the lie to the Speaker of the sublime assurance—"I am the Resurrection and the Life."

Archdeacon Blunt was in no wise prepared for the swooping down of a Fra Girolamo, to thrust a finger of protest into his own "purely personal" parochial pie. The shock affected him strangely. His friends prophesied a

riot in the town ; whereupon it is reported that he removed his person to his mother's house, and caused the Mayor of Scarborough to eat and sleep with the Riot Act up his sleeve, in order that he might be prepared to breathe it forth from the Vicarage doorstep at a moment's notice, should circumstances become acute.

But the good Archdeacon need not have taken such precautions. Father Ignatius had no intention of allowing the zeal of his congregation to degenerate into the evanescent fury of an intemperate street mob. He required something deeper and stronger than the bursting of a bubble. It is true that he told his hearers "Dean Stanley must first be dealt with by a Congress of Christians—the Christians present at that moment in the theatre"; but his challenge was directed towards the hearts and souls of intelligent fellow-countrymen, not to the fists of a stupid rabble.

And that flaming gauntlet the Press of Scarborough (or at least the secular portion of it) not only raised but wore. The Dean's unblushing assertion, in the parish pulpit, that the Church of England owed her mission not to God but the People, received its due flagellation at the journalistic pillar ; but with that the protest ended. Every one save the Almighty let the matter drop. The same night on which the Dean had promulgated his dangerous teachings (in his oration on the Roman Catacombs) in the Spa Saloon, that entire building was burnt to the ground. "A coincidence," many will say ; but will not there be a few who will discern the Hand of the Offended ?

It goes without saying that no "Church" Congress ever dealt with the Dean of Westminster, or even evinced a moribund ambition towards the regeneration of Ecclesiastical Law, in regard to its application to salaried teachers of false doctrine in the Anglican Communion.

Like Elijah of old, who stood alone upon Carmel, Father Ignatius is the only man who has ever raised the question of the subjection or ejection of heretical dignitaries,

before the National Councils. And we know with what result. Practically none, for lack of official backing, or still better, of single-minded leadership on the part of Theological Authority, interpreted by the Arch-Episcopacy and Co. of Great Britain.

CHAPTER XLIII

“SHE IS NOT DEAD, BUT SLEEPETH”

“ Oh for an Angel's tongue to tell
The happiness of those
Who live and reign with Christ on high,
In lasting sweet repose !”

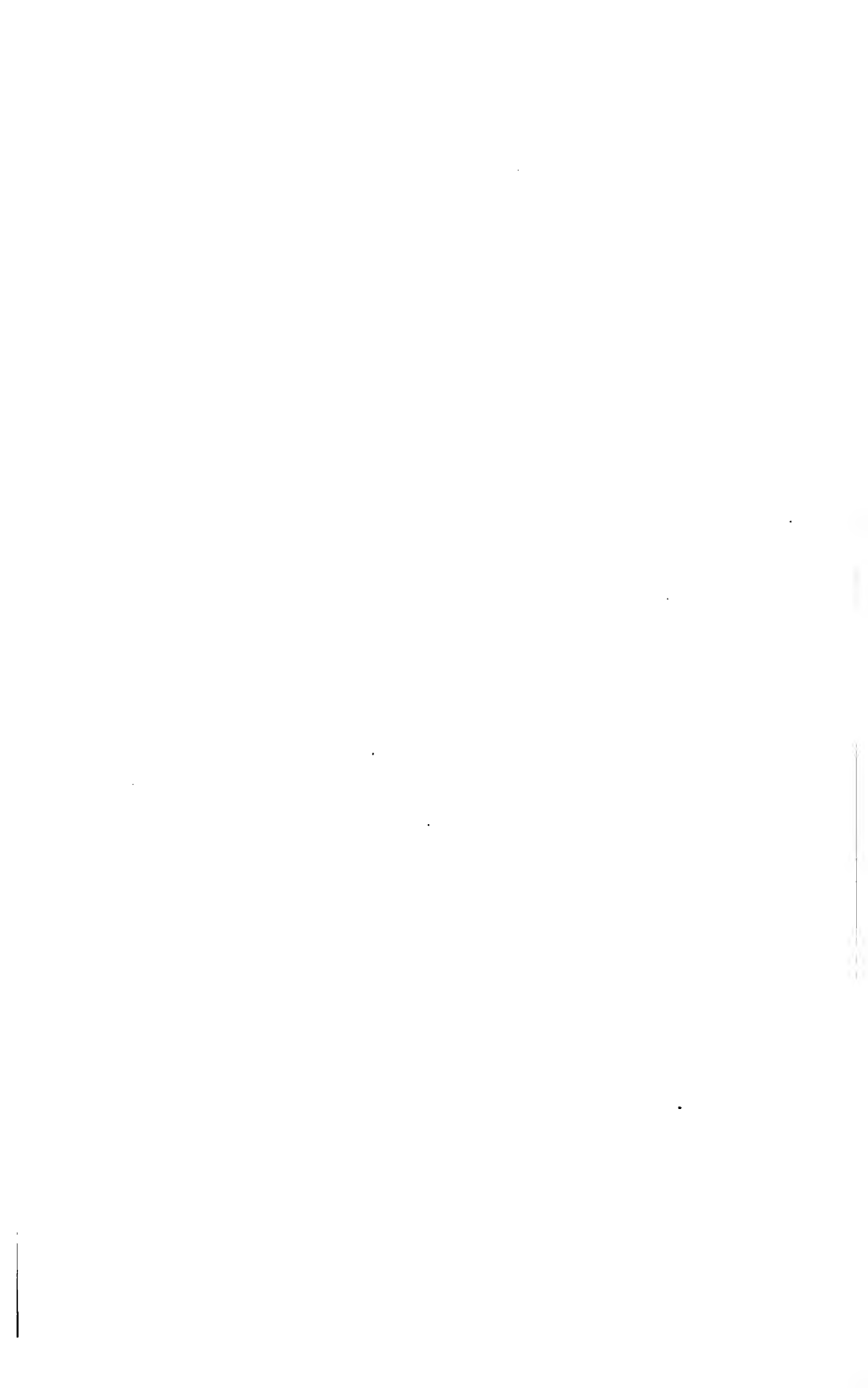
THE burden of this chapter is a requiem ! Slowly but surely the Silent Angel was drawing near the devoted mother whose soul had been pierced by the sword of her son's sorrows and persecutions. Mrs. Lyne was going Home !

For about fourteen months before the final Message came, it was known that she was gradually passing away. The prolonged mental anguish of many consecutive years, had culminated in one of those heavy physical crosses from which there is no deliverance this side of the Valley of the Shadow. The patient herself made no secret of the real cause of her malady. “ I have endured nearly fifteen years of agony, seeing my son suffer,” she would constantly reiterate ; and those who knew her best, felt that she spoke the truth. She was dying of grief—the needless grief thrust upon her delicate sensibility, by the systematic injustice with which her favourite child had been treated by those who, according to Divine Right, should have been the first to welcome him in their Church.

In especial, the untoward attitude of the English Bishops towards her beloved Monk, was a source of keen distress to this loyal mother. It has been said by more than one of her family, that her death-blow was dealt her as far back as the spring of 1876, when by an arbitrary act of tyranny, the Bishop of Chester inhibited



THE REV. FATHER'S MOTHER
TAKEN AT THE AGE OF 62, THE YEAR BEFORE HER DEATH



the Reverend Father from officiating in the churches of his diocese. This interdiction was a cruel shock, and an unexpected one, inasmuch as the Monk had just then completed two magnificent Missions at Liverpool and Wavertree, and was about to commence another even more brilliant at Birkenhead, when the engines of conversion had suddenly to be reversed, and the great work for God brought to a standstill.

There was a double humiliation attached to this order of suspension, for it was provoked wholly by the animosity of a certain seven of the Reverend Father's fellow-clergy—Christian ministers?—to whom the sway exercised by their spiritual brother's oratory seemed to suggest both danger and offence. Upon the fiery representations of these green-eyed gentlemen, the Bishop hastily inflicted upon the astonished Missioner, the maximum penalty which Canon Law reserves for the Priest or Deacon who violates the solemn obligations he has assumed on entering the service of the Church.

No amount of petitioning against this unjust mandate availed to induce the Diocesan to revoke his signature. The warrant was issued, and it had to be obeyed, so the throat of the Mission was cut. Popular indignation ran very high—higher perhaps than the Bishop quite relished, for he received an urgent protest, signed by 400 members of the Reverend Father's Birkenhead congregation in the church porch, on the Sunday morning when the inhibition was announced. But it was lost labour to kick against the ecclesiastical pricks, so the people were forced to swallow their disappointment, and the Monk his sense of injury, which was overpowering. Not only did his own heart tell him that these two Missions had been unusually blessed to God's glory and the good of souls, but he had been greeted in both cities with a Christian large-mindedness by those outside the pale of his own communion. At Liverpool, the Roman Catholic Bishop of Salford, and many of his flock, had been numbered amongst his congregation (in Great St. Martin's Church), while likewise at Wavertree

the most signal liberality had been accorded him, at the hands of Papists, Nonconformists, and Anglicans both High and Low. It was bitterness indeed, to know that he owed so unmerited a denunciation to his *soi-disant* brothers in Christ, but the Reverend Father's experiences in this direction have been very varied and not always happy, and he must have learned to smile at the "peculiarities" of the English Episcopacy.

Mrs. Lyne took the matter most terribly to heart. It was not often that she handled her pen otherwise than as an olive branch of peace, but at the news of her son's moral martyrdom the "mother" rose up within her, and she determined to use her quill as a weapon in his defence. Some years previously, this gentle but far-seeing woman had taken the precaution of asking those who had known her Monk all his life—such as his schoolmasters, tutor, and College Professors—to give her in writing a candid testimonial, setting forth their respective appreciations, of the individual character of the man who was now playing a much criticised part behind the world's footlights. These replies, which are unconditionally and unanimously most respectful tributes, have been quoted in extracts among the early pages of this work. For the enlightenment of the Bishop of Chester, Mrs. Lyne submitted them to him in their entirety, enclosed in a long letter, expressive of her distress that an unoffending and gifted preacher of God's Word, should meet with unmerited insult from an Authority delegated to protect its subordinates, not oppress them.

I regret I cannot reproduce this letter, but I can only find space for one or two brief quotations. It is dated the 11th of April 1876, just one year and three months before the writer was called to her rest. After expatiating very strongly on her own feelings in the matter, which she calls "the most painful and urgent persecution of her son, Father Ignatius," Mrs. Lyne goes on to designate the Bishop himself as the "unhappy but perhaps innocent instrument" of this persecution, and to express herself unreservedly on the

point of the source of the attack—the misrepresentations of "malcontents" who were "Christian Ministers."

"I could anxiously have wished," she writes, "that when your Lordship put your hand to the pen to sign what I may call the death-warrant of my son's Mission, you had had a wife at your elbow like unto Pilate's wife. You would have been saved from this unjust deed. My son's life has been one long persecution."

Then the mother shows how the Monk's heart had been given to God, "ever since he could speak or walk," and asks the Bishop to read the enclosed testimonies of others "who have watched over this saintly son from his earliest youth."

The letter, which was a very simple embodiment of restrained pathos, proved to be one of the many lost love-labours with which this cold world is strewn, as with rose-leaves, that the first wind withers and sweeps aside. It is to be hoped, that as an individual, the Bishop felt the prick of the appeal, but as the official, it was powerless to move him to reparation; and the realisation of this fact brought The Shadow still nearer to the disappointed mother. Mrs. Lyne was not only to know the bitterness of her own heart, but of her child's heart also, and under this double burden she sank.

From that date, the light waned obviously, and dwindled day by day to a feeble flicker, which nothing but the breath of angels could revive. The details of this painful period are too sacred to be unveiled. One of the Reverend Father's many sources of anguish, was his own inability to be constantly—as constantly as he could have wished—with his beloved mother during the last weary mile of her earthly journey. But the call of duty was stern and relentless, and this additional cross had to be endured. Every spare moment, when his back could conscientiously be turned on his Monastery or Mission, saw the Monk at his mother's side; but these occasions were of necessity of brief duration, and the invalid was too unselfish even to suggest that they should be prolonged. Almost up to the last few days of

her life, it was her chief pleasure to save (or collect among her intimate friends) little hoards of money for Llanthony; and one of the Abbot's dearest treasures is a tiny parcel containing £3, preserved in their original wrapper, which his mother gave him, on the day when they bade each other the longest *au revoir* that can be said on earth.

In the spring of 1877, the end was seen to be rapidly approaching, and the Reverend Father was summoned to Cheltenham, where his family was then living. At that time, Father Ignatius had not seen his mother for some weeks, and he was scarcely prepared for the terrible physical change that had taken place in the interval. Always delicate and fragile in appearance, Mrs. Lyne was reduced to a mere breath of womanhood. "Look, darling," she said, holding up her little wasted hand, as the Monk came to her bedside, "isn't poor Mammy thin?"—and the greeting almost robbed him of the self-possession which for her sake he knew he dared not relax.

A little later, a decided rally ensued, and it was decided to move the patient to Margate, and afterwards to Broadstairs—a place for which she had always evinced a special liking. On this journey she was accompanied by the Reverend Father, who together with his youngest sister, and the hospital nurse in attendance, travelled in a private invalid carriage which had been specially engaged for her use. This transit was fraught with intense trial to the gentle sufferer, and at one time, when owing to necessary changes and shuntings, the car had been carelessly coupled to the rear of the train, the Monk was distracted to see the actual torture she endured, through the increased oscillation she was subjected to.

But her martyrdom was always patiently endured, and she was able to answer her children's anxious questions with her usual cheerfulness—"Never mind! The right one has got the pain. It is God's will that *I* should get into the boat first."

For some weeks the rally continued, and when at length, after what was for him a long absence from his

Monastery, the Reverend Father's accumulation of duties obliged him to return to Wales, it was with no apprehension of immediate danger that he received what was to be his mother's last word and kiss.

The isolation of Llanthony and its primitive postal-telegraphic arrangements, were later on the combined reason, that the Abbot was denied the consolation of another glimpse of the face dearest to him on earth, either living or wrapped in its sweetest sleep.

One morning—the midday of Sunday, July 22nd—the Reverend Father was as usual in his cell, after the eleven-o'clock service, when a strange thing happened. Through the open lattice swept a breath of soft but strong wind, which seemed to reach his own person and then waft out again by the way it came, while at the same moment he heard his name—the old home-name of "Leycester"—called with great distinctness.

"Some one is dead!" That was the vivid impression which the occurrence left upon the Father's mind, and he expressed as much to one of his Brothers who happened a moment later to enter the cell. Yet by some inexplicable illusion, he failed to connect this phenomenon with the preoccupation uppermost in his thoughts. In the course of the following Wednesday forenoon, the same Monk came into his presence, an open telegram in hand. One glance at the face of the new-comer was enough. "Reverend Father," said the Brother very gently, "it has pleased our Lord to take Mrs. Lyne." Then her son knew that he was motherless, and the mystery of the rush of wind (or wings) was made clear to him: It was his mother who had called him, on her way to Paradise. Even in that supreme moment, she had not forgotten the lonely worker for "Jesus Only" in his distant mountain-home.

"God's will be done," was the only comment with which the Father received the news of his bereavement; and then, after a short time of solitude and prayer, he prepared for an immediate journey—the journey that was to give him his place in the circle of "those left behind."

The Reverend Father only arrived at Broadstairs in time to see a sealed casket, and assist at the final laying to rest of the beloved remains in the peaceful Garden of Sleep.

By an unlucky chance, the telegram announcing Mrs. Lyne's death had been delivered at the Abbey two whole days after its expedition. The nearest telegraphic station being at that time fifteen miles away, the transmission of the wire had been entrusted to a friendly farmer, who happened to be "in town" (Abergavenny) when it arrived, and was known to be going up the Valley in the direction of the Monastery. Owing to some carelessness or misapprehension of the importance of the commission, the telegram lay for forty-eight hours in this countryman's pocket, before its existence was remembered. Thus, much valuable time was irremediably lost, and what was even more poignant, the Reverend Father was debarred from the dearest privilege of sorrow—that last loving look which can never grow old or dim.

Nevertheless, there was a deep note of restfulness that seemed to sanctify his grief—a strange conviction of the nearness of the glorified spirit to his own inner self, and this unseen presence had overshadowed him ever since he set out from his Abbey as a mourner. It was with perfect calm, almost with ecstatic emotion, that he at length knelt in the quiet room, and commenced the grand old Office for the departed—"The Lord, to Whom all things live, O come let us adore."

There was very little left to tell the Monk-son, and that little was peace.

"Death had left on her only the beautiful," the undimmed blue eyes, and the bright curling auburn hair, which even Time and Sorrow had been too pitiful to touch. The closing in of the shadows had been very rapid, very gentle—just the ideal "death of the righteous," the typical "last end" which all Christians pray may be theirs. The rest was silence.

And so they left her to sleep in the summer sunshine, with the flowers, in God's Acre, Margate. A large white

cross marks the place, and this cross is raised on seven stones, symbolical of her sevenfold motherhood. In progression, according to seniority, each child has caused a step to be engraved with a tribute of his or her choice. Most of these messages of love are chosen words of Scripture, but on the third step occur two words—"Jesus Only"—the password of her third child. No need to question their significance! They are the Divine Threads which bind Llanthony to its sleeping benefactress, the glorious Secret shared alike by mother and son, the one in the Kingdom of the Little Children, the other still waiting his whisper to join her there.

It may interest some amongst my readers, and especially those who have known and loved this holy woman, if I here reproduce the text of the dedicatory tribute in the Abbey Church, by which her name will be memorised to perpetuity in the heart of the Christian world.

Under the direction of the Abbot of Llanthony, the expert brush of the Rev. Mother Cecilia, Nun of Slapton (and subsequently of Llanthony), elaborated the following words with the glory of touch and colour:—

"In all things let God be glorified."

Jesus  Only.

Pax.

In sacred and most grateful Memory of

LOUISA GENEVIEVE LYNE,

Benefactress and Promoter of our Holy Order, and the

Devoted Mother of the First Superior

Ignatius of Jesus,

Whose sufferings and troubles in promoting Monastic Life in the Church of England brought upon her an illness of 14 years, ending with 7 months of terrible agony, most meekly and patiently borne without one single murmur. She passed as a Martyr to her Crown, between Saturday, July 21st, and Sunday, July 22nd, 1877, at 12.40—at Broadstairs in Kent.

Her body was buried in peace in the Cemetery at Margate, on the left-hand side of the carriage road, entering by the North Gate, July 26th, 1877, Feast of St. Anne.

"Then are they glad, because they are at rest."

"Thy comforts have refreshed my soul."

Jesu Mercy  Ladye Help.

O thou, who art so soon likewise to pass from hence, of
your Charity, pray for her.

Requiem aeternam dona ei Domine

Et Lux Perpetua Luceat ei.

With the purpose in mind of eliminating all outside sounds from the leading motive of this chapter, I have postponed the statistical side of its periods for another atmosphere, when the hush shall have lifted, and the last sweet notes of the Song of Sleep have been carried away by Echo-Angels into the Paradise of Memory.

Requiescat in Pace.

CHAPTER XLIV

“A NOISE OF MANY WATERS”

“’Tis sunlight on the sea !
All stormy though it be,
Poor mariner, for thee ;
For Jesus rules the waves.”

WITH the strange sample of the Episcopal conscience (recorded two chapters back) still warm in the reader's remembrance, it will not be incongruous to draw up a very brief summary of the Reverend Father's actual position, with respect to these dignitaries both English and Welsh. Of the Scottish Bishops, Father Ignatius speaks with cordial gratitude. They have bestowed on him at least a timid sympathy, and if their partisanship has been somewhat invertebrate, it has nevertheless possessed the virtue of kindly expressed neutrality. It must also be borne in mind, that the Episcopacy of Scotland is but the little finger of Ecclesiastical Authority. In conjunction with the thumb of Canterbury and the muscular forefinger of York (let alone the supplementary joints of the leading Bishoprics), the Scottish Mitres complete the index of a potential and far-reaching hand. Measured alone, they are but specks on the horizon. No little finger, however wiry, would attempt a solo of opinion against the deafening chorus of its big brothers.

It is therefore with feelings of unmixed appreciation, that the Reverend Father remembers the Blessings and words of encouragement, he received at different times, from the good Bishops of Moray and Ross, Brechin, and Argyll and the Isles.

Of the Purple side of the Shamrock, the Monk of Llanthony has had no personal experience. His duties as Missioner have not yet led him across the Irish Channel.

There can be no indiscretion in identifying the perpetrators of kind thoughts and deeds, and under this heading the Reverend Father only too gratefully includes more than one well-known name on the list of English Bishops. It was to the large-minded justice of Dr. Ellicott, that he owed his first hearing in Congress, while the only recognition of his call from God he ever received from an English dignitary, came to him from the saintly lips of Bishop Selwyn, who in the year 1877, invited him to the Palace, Lichfield, in the following kind words:—

“I only wish that your Monastery were in my diocese, for I could then help you. I perfectly appreciate the need in the Church of England for the resurrection of the Contemplative Life.”

The late Dr. Tait, during his Primacy, was one of the Monk's best friends in the National Church. Upon the Reverend Father's promise that he would preach in the conventional surplice, and not make monasticism the climax of his sermons, the Archbishop gave him free access to the pulpits of his diocese, and in many ways smoothed the official pathway to extensive and soul-saving Missions in comparatively forgotten centres. Only a very short time before his death, Dr. Tait wrote a most consoling letter to Mrs. Lyne, expressing his sympathy with her anxiety on her son's behalf, and ending with the assurance that it would give him “personal pleasure to see Father Ignatius in Priest's Orders.”

With the exception of one friendly Blessing on the part of the Bishop of Ely—also a reminiscence of the seventies—and an ungracious permission later on from Dr. Temple to preach on week-days in the London pulpits (it being that Bishop's opinion that “so foolish a man” could not do harm), the record of the “bright side” ends. Its parallel over the Welsh border shows a lamentable blank—a fact which I am glad to note has not escaped the pen of more

than one journalist who has kindly devoted a few lines to the advent of this volume.

From first to last, the Bishops holding the Welsh Sees have tried to silence the Founder of Llanthony, and bar his road to the Priesthood. In some instances they have treated him with open rudeness, in others with covert animosity, and in all with a most unchristian lack of charity. They have misrepresented his words, and placed him in false positions, shutting the doors of their churches against him, and thus depriving countless human beings of the spiritual consolations of a most singularly blessed ministry. They have banned him, ignored him, and never stretched a hand towards him; yet for all that, they have never overwhelmed him, for the Greatest Shepherd of All has stepped in, to compensate the shortcomings of His delegates.

In the eyes of the Welsh Bishops, the Reverend Father's chief defection lies in the fact that he is a Monk. His black habit and tonsure, together with the additional aggravation of his Monastery being a self-governing institution—and therefore out of reach of diocesan jurisdiction—have been sources of inflammation not to be condoned.

It has been impossible to impeach the doctrines of the preacher, or to cast a slur on the personal character of the religious, therefore the mere fact of his monasticism has been taken as a justification for tacit warfare. At any rate, it has sufficed to call out the respective artilleries of St. David's, Llandaff, and St. Asaph's, in a manner which certainly blurs the never too clearly defined line lying between Christian austerity and most anti-Christian bullying.

From the first moment that Father Ignatius set foot in Wales as a resident, he offered his gratuitous services to the Bishops as Preacher and Missioner, assuring them at the same time of his respect for his diocesan rulers, and his desire to demonstrate that respect by submitting to them in all things. This supererogatory act of courtesy, from the Superior of an extra-diocesan Monastery, was either ignored altogether, or answered with an unmitigated rebuff. The

nightmare of monkery was evidently suggestive of scare to the easy-going Bishops, and to this day they are unable to look upon its uncrushable leader as anything more than a deluded nondescript, whose natural gifts, added to an unaccountable popularity, make him a danger as well as a conundrum to the Church.

From the English Episcopacy the Reverend Father has received (on the whole) little better treatment, though, as I have striven to show, the official cold shoulder has been more than once replaced by both words and deeds of kindness which are never to be forgotten. Here are one or two samples of the peculiar and incongruous methods adopted by Anglican Authority, towards the man who has never at its hand received the right accorded to every condemned criminal—that of a fair hearing, or the shadow of one.

The first decisive move dates back to Claydon, when the Bishop of Norwich inhibited Brother Ignatius, and later on directed one of his Norwich clergy to “pass him over at the Communion rail, if he came in that absurd dress.” Another lapse of fifteen years, and this same Bishop welcomed the Monk-Abbot to his diocese, and greeted the “absurd dress” with smiling silence when it appeared in his pulpits.

A curious example of the Christianity of Dr. Wilberforce has already appeared in these pages in the chronicles of the sixties. The reader will remember with what asperity his lordship of Oxford received certain letters written him by the then youthful Monk, and in what manner this correspondence incurred immortality, years later, in the Memoirs of the popular Bishop. Dr. Wilberforce's admonitions to the zealous Benedictine were reproduced in full, but the Reverend Father's letters were carefully suppressed. This recapitulation is only *par parenthèse*, but it is too significant to be forgotten.

The Archbishop of York was the next to take to the warpath, likewise in the early days, when monasticism was a newly raised spectre. The Father had gone to Sheffield to lecture in the theatre, and he was met by a

lofty Canon bearing the warrant of Dr. Thompson's displeasure. Whereupon the Monk read the inhibition and laughed outright, greatly to the scandal of the pompous messenger. "I did not know," said the Reverend Father, after apologising politely for his hilarity, "that Archbishops possessed jurisdiction over theatres as well as churches. Surely there is a little mistake somewhere." And the Canon had to retire crestfallen, while the Monk proceeded in peace to his theatre, and preached Jesus to his heart's content.

After this slight clash of steel, the Archbishop had his knife in the Father, and the Scarborough episode of 1876 did not tend to soften the weapon of retaliation. Dr. Thompson bitterly resented the public exposure of Dean Stanley's heresies, and the reflex inference thereby cast upon the doctrinal soundness of Archdeacon Blunt, at whose suggestion this sower of tares found his way to the parish pulpit. There were many threads of offence connected with the denunciation of the Dean. Not only was the Archdeacon a familiar figure in the York Diocese, but in former years he had worked with Dr. Basil Jones of St. David's—a circumstance which in itself was not calculated to procure favour for the Monk. When, in 1878, finding all personal appeals vain, the Reverend Father appeared at the Sheffield Congress, with the intention of calling his brother clergy to rise up and quell a growing and unchecked germ of infidelity in their country's Church, Dr. Thompson (who presided) curtly refused him the right of speech, upon which an uproar ensued, and cries of "Ignatius!" "Go on, Father!"—joined in by a goodly number of clerics—were mingled with a noisy counter-murmur from the opposite side of opinion.

The Archbishop promptly forestalled the "scene" that appeared to be inevitable, by ignoring the Monk's forcibly enunciated claim to be heard, and giving out a hymn, the execution of which involved the aid of the great organ at full power. This unmannerly and undignified act on the part of the president, evoked a buzz of indignation in a

large circle of onlookers who were anything but "Ignatian" in their tendencies, yet nevertheless lovers of fair play.

When, in 1893, during the famous *Lux Mundi* incident, the Bishop of Worcester evinced the same desire to silence an inconvenient voice, he had recourse to strategy, knowing full well that the people of Birmingham would rise against the "playing down" of their Missioner. By that time the Monk's influence had gained breadth and depth in the land, and during that very Congress week he was drawing congregations of several thousands to the halls of the city. This episode is of too significant an import not to be revived in its own section among the monuments of the nineties. I shall add nothing more concerning it in this chapter, save the fact that Dr. Perowne cajoled the Father into waiting his turn to speak, by sending him a written promise (extant at Llanthony) that "he should be heard immediately after one or two other speakers, whose cards had been sent in before his own." This promise the Bishop both made and broke publicly, shuffling lamely out of his solemn obligation, by the excuse that he felt sure the Monk would make his discourse a personal attack on a fellow-clergyman, and for that reason it was better cancelled. As these immediate pages are dedicated to "Bishops only," I shall reserve the details which surrounded this disgraceful subterfuge, for a chapter dealing more comprehensively with the undercurrent of the Congress. Those who have only a vague recollection of this much criticised occurrence, will find interesting reading in the leading London and Birmingham papers of the time, and they will note how the enemies of monasticism and the friends of "peace at any price in the Churches" are unanimous in condemning (or refraining to applaud) a precedent which silences, on the one hand, a man who, despite his peculiarities of dress and plain speaking, no one can call other than a devout Christian, and supports, on the other, the writer of a book which is nothing short of an unblushing denial of the essences of the Christian Faith. The *Standard* and the *Birmingham Daily Gazette* have

very able articles touching on these contrasts and their relation to representative piety.

This brings us to the crux of the Reverend Father's grievance against the official Powers that be. He writhes under the inconsistency of their attitude—their tacit repudiation of himself, an immutable believer in Jesus Christ and the Bible, and their toleration of self-avowed disbelievers in the Personal Saviour, and the infallibility of His Inspired Word.

In the library of Llanthony Abbey, there is copious testimony to corroborate this appalling statement, in the shape of original letters from Archbishops and Bishops, of dates both remote and recent. These, taken in combination, form a lamentably suggestive, if not accusatory voice, the more so that each budget contains copies of the Reverend Father's own respectful intimations, that "these things ought not to be so."

But Father Ignatius has no need to drift into personal aspersion in order to bolster up his cause of complaint. The finger of public events points even too plainly to the justice of his apprehensions. Taking only two items from the Church History of the last ten years, what do we find? The editor of *Lux Mundi* wears the mitre at Worcester, while the man whose essay on the "New Reformation" Archdeacon Denison denounces as "the consummation and condensation of all heresy," has been rewarded by promotion to the Deanery of Ripon.

One well-known Anglican dignitary has tried to console the Reverend Father with the assurance, that the responsibility of these and similar elections does not rest solely with the Ecclesiastical authorities, but still more with the Cabinet Ministers, whose duty it is to investigate such appointments, and ensure their discreet distribution. This appreciation of the question indicates a still deeper and more impregnable root of the evil—one, indeed, which must be an astounding revelation to Christians in general, and especially to members of the Roman Communion, where the lightest whisper against Faith or Bible, is answered by immediate ejection at the point of the Pontifical toe.

"The Bible," said Leo XIII., "is God's Word, and for that reason there can be no error in it." Father Ignatius holds the identical opinion, and likewise expresses it in very plain English—most likely, more plain than politic. Yet surely it is but poor justice to dub him a "hunter up of heresies," for no better reason than that he takes upon himself to defend, what by right of sacred and inviolable law, should never stand in need of defence.

As a matter of fact, he does not hunt *up* heresies—he hunts them *down*! When they are publicly thrust before his face, he grips them by the throat—that is all. No man is more large-minded towards infidels and agnostics than the Reverend Father, as long as they "walk out of the Church like gentlemen," and do not accept salaries which common honesty should urge them to repudiate. It is the hypocrites, the religious humbugs, against whom the Monk is incensed, and against those who condone such degenerates, by suffering them to remain within the pale.

This chapter being a parenthetical step aside from the straight way of narration, I may as well conclude it with an attempt to answer a few questions, which will suggest themselves to the average outsider, who may not know Father Ignatius and his "views" sufficiently well to render surmise unnecessary. It is a common source of wonderment, that the Father has not long since been driven from the English Church, by the persistent attitude of its Episcopacy, or the unchecked infidelity permitted among its clergy. To this, has frequently been added the supposition that sooner or later he would either "go over" to Rome, or seek the refuge of Nonconformity, like the great John Wesley, who was literally hounded out of the Anglican Communion by the tyranny of its Bishops.

Very few words of enlightenment are needed on these points. Father Ignatius is not the man to be driven out of anywhere, least of all out of his own Church. He has revived the monastic institution in the Church of Britain, and his desire is to die as he has lived—a British Monk. The froward ways of his brother Anglicans, have only

served to rivet his determination to stick to his guns. Like a loyal captain, he clings to his ship (sinking or otherwise), and prefers to go down in her rather than desert his colours.

Much as the Reverend Father reveres the Church of Rome and the Rule of her great Bishop, few people are less likely than himself to join her Communion. No Anglican has probably ever been so near the Roman gates, without crossing them, as the Monk of Llanthony; but having implicit faith in the validity of English Orders, he has felt no desire to seek a change.

There are also certain barriers of dogma which, says he, would render such a step impossible. And here we drift into the subject of Father Ignatius' "religious views," a topic which has been torn to tatters and suffered every variety of misrepresentation that it is possible to conceive. I may as well therefore, touch in passing upon the chief headings under which the Reverend Father writes *Credo*, and those which he sees fit to leave in blank.

With regard to the Church of Rome, and using his own words, Father Ignatius finds no difficulty in accepting her leading doctrines, but not what he terms her "peculiarities" or "excrescences," meaning by these, certain dogmas which have been dignified into Articles of Faith by the proclamation of her Œcumenical Councils. Thus, in common with Rome, the Monk believes all the fundamental truths of the Catholic Faith, inclusive of the Real Presence in the Holy Eucharist, the Veneration of Mother Mary, the Invocation of Saints, and the recognition of the Seven Sacraments. Here the unanimity ends.

The Father accepts the dogma of "The Immaculate Conception" as a very beautiful and reverent suggestion, but not as a Divine revelation. He repudiates in their entirety the use of Indulgences, and the belief in Purgatory *as a place of expiation*—both these trains of thought being to his mind, incompatible with a profession of faith in the All-Sufficient Atonement of Calvary. The Papal Infallibility he gently sets aside, as an excellent string to

bind the faggot, and a splendid measure for maintaining discipline in the Church, but he doubts the assertion, that the Holy Father's edicts uttered from the Chair are the result of direct inspiration from the Godhead.

The suppression of the Chalice in the administration of Holy Communion to the faithful, is likewise a stumbling-block which the Monk declares would alone suffice to keep him outside the Papal fold. It is suggestive to him of nothing less than a "mutilated Sacrament"—a thought which he cannot reconcile with his religious sensibility.

When I have added that Father Ignatius prays for the dead as well as the living, and that he believes in Hell, for the *wilfully* wicked, I think I shall have summed up most of the details of a strong childlike code of faith, which may be almost expressed in these four words—*Jesus and the Bible*. There is great individuality about the Monk's religion. It is very restrictive, very concentrated on the one Face, the one Figure. All the rest is to him background and afterthought. He lives for his motto—"Jesus Only"—and that suffices him. His ritualism is only an adjunct, that is born of an innate love of "the beautiful" in absolute harmony with God's Word, but it is not an essential to his soul's necessity.

This appreciation may be a disappointment to many, but it will be a comfort to still more. Straightforward sincerity holds the pass-key to every heart, and in this transcendent virtue, no one can accuse the Reverend Father of falling short.

I would like to appendix one word on the subject of proselytism. There is a superb magnanimity about the Father's method of reaching souls. "Christianity first, Churchianity afterwards," is a favourite saying of his own, and he acts up to it. He will seize every opportunity of asking a chance-met brother or sister, "Do you trust in Jesus?" but it is very rarely, and then only in conclusion, that he is ever heard to inquire whether his acquaintance is a Roman, Anglican, or Methodist.

Likewise his methods of preaching peace and circum-

venting ruptures, are unique and inimitable; yet his opportunities for sowing the whirlwind have been many. More than one rebel Roman Priest has sought refuge at Llanthony, and under the influence of its Abbot, returned repentant to his duty and his fold. In one case, a period of seven months elapsed before the reconciliation could be effected, but in the end peace came. Only in the beginning of this new century, four hundred Roman Priests—who were anxious to break away from the yoke of the Roman Curia and yet hold the Catholic faith—offered to put themselves under the Father's banner, provided he would lead a movement of Emancipated Catholicism in England.

To send these misguided people back to their Church, was a work which the Monk earnestly sought to promote. "There are already too many divisions in the Christian Church," he wrote; "go back to your Bishops and submit." Another proof of the absolute loyalty of Father Ignatius to the National Church, was his refusal to accept the important post of Archbishop and Metropolitan to the Independent Catholics of Britain, offered him in 1899 by the Jacobite Patriarch of Antioch. This appointment alone, would have secured him power and distinction, but he received it with the same answer—"Nothing will induce me to leave my Church."

These details are not the miasma of the biographer's brain, but carefully sifted facts, the written proofs of which have passed through the hand that traces these lines. The same privilege has been accorded the author, with regard to the very delicate and painful task of outlining the Reverend Father's position *vis-à-vis* to the Episcopacy of Great Britain. Nothing has been stated that cannot be clearly substantiated, and a great deal has been withheld, both from lack of space and an earnest desire not to outstep discretion.

It is always an ungrateful task to write unpleasant truths. Nevertheless, this volume would have been absurdly incomplete, had the treatment which Father Ignatius has received from his Bishops been supinely ignored.

At the door of his Diocesan, naturally lies the most prominent weight of responsibility. As a Missioner, the Monk has to a certain degree collided with the Episcopal variety *en passant*, but little more, whereas, as the Abbot of Llanthony and a resident in the diocese of St. David's for over thirty years, it might reasonably have been supposed that from at least *one* of the two Bishops who have reigned during that period, the Superior of a noted religious House, and a divinely blessed Evangelist, would have received the recognition due from one gentleman to another. Neither have chosen to extend him a fatherly hand, not even the tip of a benevolent finger.

In 1883, Dr. Basil Jones put his veto on the kindly intervention of a Colonial Bishop who signified his willingness (under Diocesan approval) to confer the Order of Priesthood upon the Monk. "I shall be very happy," wrote the Father's friend, "to give you what you undoubtedly ought to have had long ago—the sacerdotal character." But the Diocesan would not.

In 1898, when for the sake of the pressing need of a Priest in his Monastery, Father Ignatius was led to accept the higher Order from a Syrian Archbishop—this Order being conferred for use in the Monastery *only*—Dr. Jones's successor expressed his sorrow at the step. Furthermore, he reproached the Reverend Father with not having made his desire for the Priesthood known to himself, the Diocesan, who "would most certainly have given it careful consideration."

The letter was kindly worded, but it came too late, from a man who had hitherto evinced decisive symptoms of walking in the harsh tracks of his predecessor. The Reverend Father had been patient for thirty-eight years in the Diaconate, and there are times when patience may merge into weakness, and weakness into offence. He felt that the hour had come for him to wait no longer, as the oldest Deacon in his Church, and he saw the Hand of God in the offer of the Eastern Archbishop.

So he accepted it, thereby passing in silence over the

heads of those who would have had him die a Deacon—vested with the sacerdotal authority of a Church whose Orders are undisputed by the combined Christian world. If the Bench of British Bishops affects to look with sorrow on the Llanthony ordination, that sorrow should be tempered with personal reflection. The cause must be judged face to face with its result. If Father Ignatius' position can be called “equivocal,” which it sometimes is, by reason of his Syrian priesthood, the position of those who supplied the prologue to this climax, should surely be expressed in still sterner language.

If the ways of ordinary men are narrow, what about the ways of Bishops, the professing “promoters” of Faith and *Charity* in the Church?

This chapter is just a daisy-chain of inferences—a few impartial drops gathered by an outside hand, from a huge ocean of correspondence dating over many years, and penned from both sides of the gulf stream.

It is impossible, in this congested sketch of an entire lifetime, to devote a monopoly of space to any one particular landmark. Nevertheless, it has long since been whispered to the Reverend Father, that the skimmings of this heterogeneous budget, would in themselves furnish an edifying contribution to the Ecclesiastical Library. Whether or no the Abbot of Llanthony will finally consent to the compiling and editing of so suggestive a volume, is a problem which like many others, will find its solution in future developments.

CHAPTER XLV

“PERSECUTED, BUT NOT FORSAKEN”

“O King of Beauty ! Jesus, Mary’s Child,
Thou art our Saviour and our dearest Friend ;
In Thee safe sheltered, thro’ Life’s storm so wild,
We’ll hide in Thee—until the end.”

EVEN to the busy and preoccupied Monk-Missioner, the first few months which succeeded his mother’s Home-going, were shrouded in that strange atmosphere known only to those who are susceptible to the negative agonies of life—the things missed, the countless silent voices that breathe the same whisper, “Never again.” The cessation of the unfailing weekly letter was in itself the quenching of a light. Mrs. Lyne’s letters had always been characteristic samples of her own unselfish spirit, full of loving words of encouragement, not of egotistical imaginings. Only in the postscripts did she ever betray the fever of motherly anxiety which was at work within her, and even then it was simply, “Do take more care of yourself, my darling. I am so anxious about you,”—reiterated gently and uncomplainingly from one year’s end to the other.

It was chiefly his consoling sense of her spiritual nearness, that enabled the Reverend Father to face the desolate blank that his mother’s absence left within his life, and it was perhaps in pity as well as wisdom, that Providence decreed for the closing months of 1877 to pass over in a whirl of unbroken labour. The Power of God was upon the Mission field, and upon the preacher who went forth to work in it. Before the year was out, Father Ignatius had reaped a glorious harvest of souls. Strange to say, these human sheaves were gathered in

various provincial centres, where at the outset he had been greeted with fiery opposition and prejudice, poured out from vessels of wrath. The details of these Missions alone would fill a volume, and I deeply regret the necessity which obliges me to pass them by, with the insufficient remark that they resulted in an outburst of enthusiasm which carried all before it.

This influx of converts, which curiously enough included an intimate friend of Dr. Jones, Bishop of St. David's, was not without its undercurrent of substantial help for the carrying on of the work at Llanthony. One Mission alone realised a sum of £147, an unexpected blessing that was urgently needed, inasmuch as the "passing hence" of the Founder's mother, meant a sad change on the side of the Abbey's finances. It seemed as if new friends were to be raised in the moment of greatest need, for from this date forward, the Reverend Father received several generous gifts which effectually relieved him from the pressing anxiety of immediate responsibilities. One good lady, in her zeal to express her gratitude for the Gift of God which she had received at the Mission services, made over her jewels to the Reverend Father, valued at £500; while in another town, and somewhat later, no less than seventeen rings were put into the collections. These Missions of the closing seventies, were indeed occasions of mutual help and blessing.

Anno Domini 1878, was to use the Father's own expression, a year of sorrow. Besides many lesser trials, it represents two heavy crosses in this biography—the commencement of the terrible ten years of persecution to which Mr. Lyne subjected his unoffending Monk-son, and the rebellion among the Nuns at Feltham, that ended in the distressing severance and excommunication from the Order of more than one of its members.

In the interest of this work, it is necessary to lay some stress on both these sad occurrences, and especially on the first, for the reason that it very nearly resulted in the Reverend Father's death, and the ruin of his work as a

Missioner. It is always a painful duty to revive stormy memories of the dead, and especially of one very near and dear, but as in the present case, so much public misapprehension and commentary have arisen from this crisis in the Monk's life, he has felt it to be due to himself and his father's memory, to direct his biographer to set down as briefly as may be, the true statement of the circumstances.

This statement I am most anxious to prelude by its concluding clause—the assurance that Mr. Lyne died reconciled to his son. Were I unable most emphatically to underline this consoling fact, it would sadden me inexpressibly to touch upon the few leading points which will initiate the reader into a fair comprehension of the case.

About one year after Mrs. Lyne had gone to Paradise, Father Ignatius was called upon by his father to act as arbitrator in a family dispute, then existing between himself (Mr. Lyne) and another member of the home circle. The Reverend Father expressed his willingness to sit in judgment, and accordingly studied the subject under argument with the greatest care and solicitude. Unfortunately however, his conscience as an honest umpire, prevented him from giving a verdict in his father's favour, and, albeit with reluctance, he was fain to pronounce unhesitatingly for the other side.

This "sentence" was the front and head of his offending. Mr. Lyne was furious that his son should put his father in the wrong, but the Monk could not retract his verdict, and he would not. Distressed and sorry as he was, he held to his opinion. Whereupon his father, in presence of others of his family, took a terrible vow "*to crush the Monk*"—a deliberate self-dedication to vengeance, which he lost no time in visiting heavily and relentlessly on his unhappy victim.

From that moment Father Ignatius became the object of a most scandalous pursuit. His father wrote broadcast to the London and provincial papers, attacking his son by a volley of wild, incoherent accusations. Wheresoever

the Father went to preach a Mission, these letters to the local Press preceded him, and on some occasions the towns were placarded with glaring notices exhorting the public to beware of a man who was "a thief, a deceiver, and a dishonest person—one who had killed his mother, and would soon be able to say that he had brought both his parents in sorrow to their graves." This reference to Mrs. Lyne was only added in 1883, and it was this most cruel of all the calumnies, which alone had the power to move the Reverend Father to take any steps for the public defence of his good name. All the other accusations he bore in silence, but the reference to his beloved mother, and the horrible innuendo it expressed, were more than he could bear. Then, and then only, did he determine to sift the matter out, and oblige his father either to retract or prove the fearful libels, which for years he had been publishing against his son—the son from whom he had never received anything but the most respectful affection and submission.

Personal appeals were hopeless. The Monk had in the beginning, written his father many an affectionate expostulation, setting forth in strong but gentle terms the unspeakable injustice and cruelty of the persecution to which he was subjected, but they had no effect whatsoever. Some of these letters were dictated and even drafted by Dr. Pusey, the faithful friend and spiritual father, to whom the Monk never failed to turn in his moments of need. Dr. Pusey threw himself heart and soul into the breach, and not content with assisting his old pupil in the methods of his own defence, he likewise entered into a personal correspondence with Mr. Lyne—an initiative which turned the tide of that gentleman's displeasure equally upon himself. Mr. Lyne published a book under the name of *Dr. Pusey's Defence of Father Ignatius*, which is really a summary of the letters exchanged by the Monk's accuser and advocate, during these lamentable times of war. The fact of Dr. Pusey having in years gone by sent Father Ignatius his first habit, was the rock on which Mr. Lyne based his secondary attack. Dr. Pusey, he affirmed, was

the root of all the evil, and by his subtle influence he had perverted his son. While Mr. Lyne's letters were fiery and discursive, to a degree which almost rendered them unintelligible, the would-be peacemaker's were strikingly temperate and to the point. Only when Mr. Lyne put into his mouth words that he had never uttered, did the learned Doctor evince the least desire to indulge in personal retaliation. His aim was not to cross swords or beat the bush, but simply to step in, and end a scandal which was becoming a source of ruin and danger to the Monk.

The public papers had already had their fill of the matter. "Lyne upon Lyne," as the quarrel was headed in some of the more sensational journals, had been canvassed and commented on to repletion, all over England, yet there seemed to be no end to this strange one-sided conflict, as far as the pen of the angry father was concerned. When the surfeited editors politely returned him his letters, with the remark that they declined to pursue the topic further, their irrepressible correspondent circumvented them, by sending in his rejected copy to the advertisement departments of the same papers, and paying for their insertion side by side with local announcements of sales and entertainments. Thus the ball was kept relentlessly rolling, and its effect filtered gradually into every corner of the land. Many compassionate outsiders took the cudgels up warmly, one stranger in Malvern taking upon himself to write to Mr. Lyne very plainly, telling him that he would certainly become his son's murderer if he persisted in exciting the ignorant against him, and thus expose him to the demonstrations of the rabble of the towns through which he passed.

It was at Malvern, that the Reverend Father was very nearly done to death by an infuriated mob. There can be no need to explain the eager enthusiasm, with which this quarrel between the Monk and his father was clutched at by the Protestant party, as a big bombshell ready for immediate detonation in the Mission field. The Polemics joined hand in glove with Mr. Lyne, and even outstepped

him in their endeavour to give the preacher a warm time, during his progress from town to town. They did not wait to question the justice of their pursuit, nor the reflection it was likely to cast upon their own Christianity. The blind fever of revenge was raging in their veins, and they were literally consumed by the delirium of the one triumphal fact—the Monk's own father had repudiated him and "shown him up." This infection spread to a portion of the clergy, and with that, the fatality was complete.

When the Reverend Father arrived in Malvern to fulfil his Mission engagement, he found the town lined with defamatory placards—the joint work of his father and the Protestant Association—while the newspapers teemed with letters from the same sources, warning the people of the town against the sin of going to hear "so wicked and dishonest a man." The Monk was nevertheless determined to stand his ground, and to preach his Mission at all costs. Some of the gentlemen of Malvern, (several of whom were perfect strangers,) insisted on accompanying the Father as an improvised bodyguard, to and from the Hall, but even with this kindly escort, he was publicly insulted on all sides, the mob hissing, hooting, and even attempting to pelt him whenever he showed his face.

The Protestants had not counted however, on the chivalry of a portion at least of the local manhood, and they were sadly nonplussed by the intervention of this "volunteer" guard of honour. One night, a deliberate plan was made to waylay the Missioner on his return from the Hall, at the very door of his lodgings. For this purpose, one of the mob was commissioned to watch the Monk set out for the evening service, and immediately afterwards, to wire up the garden gates of the house, with strong copper wire, so as to cut off all chance of a hasty retreat when the signal of attack should be given. These Christian instructions were carried out to the letter, but by a most merciful interposition their ultimate object was frustrated. The Monk's faithful friend and Mission-worker, Lady Frances Hamilton, was the medium chosen to effect this deliverance.

Father Ignatius happened to be in very bad health at the time, his naturally nervous and highly-strung temperament having been tried beyond its bent, by the new source of anguish afforded by his father's unnatural conduct. On that particular evening, just as he was preparing to go on the platform, he was seized with faintness, and there being nothing but a glass of water at hand, Lady Frances offered to go back to the Father's lodgings, in search of *sal volatile*. This she did, but on arriving at the gates, she found them to be wired on the outside; and so ably had the malefactor done his work, that it was only after considerable time and toil, that an entrance could be effected. Lady Frances was naturally horrified at her significant discovery, but she bravely returned to the Hall, carrying both medicine and wire with her. Thus the Monk was enabled to preach his sermon, while his friends concerted together a plan which should ensure him a safe walk home. That memorable length of wire is still preserved among the Llanthony curios. The Reverend Father unearthed it for my benefit, when giving me the notes of this period.

This Malvern episode only represents one amongst the many dangerous risks, incurred by the Monk as the result of his father's cruel and insane charges.

In order to avoid recurring to this painful subject, I shall proceed straightway to its close, and to the important arbitration which preceded the ultimate writing of *Finis* by the hand of Death.

When, in 1883, Mr. Lyne crowned his cruelty by announcing publicly that "Father Ignatius had killed his mother—she had herself said so," the English clergy (or at least some professedly Protestant members of it) began to drag the matter into the pulpits as well as the Press. One reverend gentleman preached a course of sermons in Liverpool, on the enormities of monasticism, practically illustrated by the *exposé* of the Monk Ignatius, who had been proved to be a murderer on the testimony of his own father, etc. etc. This official attack from a fellow-minister of Christ, based as it was on a most abominable reference

to a sacred and loving memory, induced the Reverend Father to break his five years' silence, and demand the proof or withdrawal of so foul a calumny.

The sympathy of the entire Lyne family was with their Monk-brother, but it was beyond the power of mortal, however nearly allied, to stem or turn the current of these lamentable events. Father Ignatius would not take legal proceedings against his own parent, but he adopted the less severe alternative, of demanding a final settlement by means of arbitration. Mr. Lyne chose as his representative a certain Rev. Dr. Wilkinson, while his son confided his honour to the care of his own uncle, his mother's brother, Augustus Leycester, of Whiteplace, Cookham. It was arranged that when each arbitrator had collected his evidence, and condensed it into a definite form, these respective summaries should in their turn be submitted to a third party, who in his quality of umpire, should adjudicate between the two, and give judgment. This judgment was to be considered final, and its publication in the leading newspapers, was to close the case for ever.

Thus this unhappy affair was distilled into concentration. Mr. Lyne had to prove his assertions that his son was the thief and murderer he represented him to be, while the Monk's duty lay in a more negative direction—the statement of a few simple facts which would for ever cut the ground from under these unreasonable allegations.

Father Ignatius had no difficulty in proving that up to the April of 1878, he and his father had been on the best of terms, and that this affectionate understanding had only been disturbed in consequence of a family dispute, altogether impersonal to the Father, but in which he had unfortunately been deputed umpire by Mr. Lyne himself. Only a week or so before his father was publicly calling him "a thief and a dishonest person," Mr. Lyne had been personally working in the Monk's Mission at Cheltenham—a strangely inconsistent act should the accused have really been the person he was afterwards represented to be. At Mrs. Lyne's

funeral, every one had remarked how entirely the chief mourner had seemed to turn to his Monk-son for support and consolation, while the letters of a lifetime (the best testimony of all, to emphasise the absolute inconsistency of his present attitude) were placed before the arbitrators, and in themselves spoke volumes. Mr. Lyne was his own accuser.

Only five years back he had written to the *Morning Post* of July 27th, 1873, the following notable appreciation of his son's character:—

"As respects my reverend son, Joseph Leycester Lyne (Father Ignatius), I love him deeply as a son, I respect him highly as a Christian, and as a moralist I owe him a very high debt of gratitude, because years ago he raised a standard of morals in my family, that made his father and his mother, and his brothers and sisters, feel and own the Light he had lit, was over-ruling and commanding."

As late as October 1877, Mr. Lyne wrote to the Father a most affectionate letter, commencing thus: "My dearest *happy* Leycester, how much good you have been doing for God's glory—I ought to be humbled and thankful." About the same time, he penned a note on the identical subject to a lady—a friend of the family—saying, "I am happy to know that my reverend son's visit has been such a comfort to you. It is his blessed power to be able to do this, out of his own contemplations."

Yet the possessor of this "blessed power," the worker of so much "good for God's glory," was in a few short weeks to be held up to public aversion, as a danger to humanity, and the "moral poisoner" of his own immediate family. The inference is too obvious and too sad for words.

Nevertheless, the arbitration proved to be very long and intricate. I shall only give the reader its result. Mr. Lyne's case could not hold water. His proof of the Monk's dishonesty resolved itself into an absurdity. "At six years old he had stolen a fourpenny-piece, and told a lie about it"—an episode referred to in one of our opening chapters.

The charge of having caused his mother's death was nothing more than a misrepresentation of some words spoken by Mrs. Lyne herself on her deathbed, before her husband and two other witnesses—the doctor, and one of her own daughters—whose unanimous testimonies leave no question, as to the perverse foolishness of the accusation.

These were the words, as given to the public by Mr. Lyne: "I have suffered fifteen years of agony *because* of my son, Father Ignatius." Whereas in reality—the reality built upon the solemn attestation of two responsible Christians—their true reproduction should have been as follows: "I have suffered nearly fifteen years of agony, *owing to the cruel treatment of the Bishops* to my son, Father Ignatius."

Very similar words, bearing a widely dissimilar meaning! The Reverend Father's sister, who supplied one of the most telling links of evidence in her brother's cause, adds the following remark, as a spontaneous underlining to her testimony on his behalf: "*I stood at the foot of the bed, and took in every word.*"

There was only one inevitable end to so many-sided and extravagant a case of arbitration. I shall not enter into its minutiae. Under the Reverend Father's instructions, I am directed to pass over painful details with the following summary. Mr. Lyne was never called upon to produce the heavy monetary compensation, which his unfounded aspersions placed at the discretion of his son, either to exact or ignore; and his penalty never reached a higher figure than a respectful but authoritative injunction to *cease from troubling*—a very negative reparation to so deep and cruel an injury.

Those who have been with the Reverend Father during the weary years which dragged from the commencement of this unnecessary feud to its final close, have been good enough to furnish me with a sadly realistic appreciation of the effect produced on him, body and mind, by the protracted agony of this veritable Via Crucis. As the man,

the son, and the public preacher, the light became as darkness before his face. It was only as the Christian—the Monk living for Jesus Only—that the sun pierced through the closed shutters of his soul. Sometimes he would keep his father's denunciations for days together unopened, not daring to read them; at others he would take them into choir, and like Hezekiah of old, spread out his grievance before the altar; but more often than not, he would silently turn his face to the wall—and suffer.

It was only the Magic Name, that could recall him from these terrible spasms of mental and psychic depression. The Name of Jesus, spoken softly and slowly, was often the means of raising him from his human weakness to the strength that is not of this world. Most gratefully and tenderly, does the Father recall the ministrations of one young Brother during this time of bitter trial, and the simple method with which this mere lad would combat his Superior's anguish, by the magnetic reiteration of the Name that is above all others.

In 1888, Mr. Lyne's perturbed spirit found rest. He died at his London home, 54 Montagu Square, in the eighty-eighth year of his age.

During these last days, it is consoling to know that many of the crooked paths were made straight. Without intruding into the privacy of the family circle, I may add that the Monk's unqualified forgiveness and Blessing, helped to make the closing hours sweet. Partly from the whispers of his own conscience, and still more from a direct warning sent him in a Vision of the Night, this strange and (in many ways) strong-natured personality came face to face at last, with the blind self-infatuation of the past ten years, and the misery he had inflicted on his child. It was very late when the scales were lifted, but not too late in the eyes of God, or in the heart of his well-nigh ruined Monk-son. Every day while life lasted, the Abbot of Llanthony gave his father a word of comfort from the Book of Life. At the passing-hour the last message reached him, and it sent him happy to his last sleep.

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"The Lord is good, a stronghold in the day of trouble, and He knoweth them that trust in Him" (Nahum i. 7).

Towards the end of 1878, a spirit of unrest manifested itself among the Benedictine Nuns at Feltham. For some time past, a little cloud of insubordination had been gathering over this Home of religious womanhood, but now this cloud was about to take definite shape and develop into storm. Not possessing the gift of ubiquity, it was impossible for the Superior of two distant Settlements, and a busy Missioner besides, to be in more than one place at once. At Feltham, the secondary reins of authority were delegated, in the Abbot's absence, to the Prioress in residence—an inevitable arrangement not altogether guaranteed from complications. The time had come when the Prioress had learned not only to steer the government of her Community, but to handle the ropes with an independent touch, somewhat too pronounced in one who had vowed unquestioning obedience to the Founder of her Order.

For many months, Father Ignatius had noted with surprise and pain the gradual growth of this self-assertive spirit, and it became his duty to check the evil—as he hoped—in the bud. I have seen a copy of the letter which in this intention he wrote to the Reverend Mother, reminding her very kindly of her obligations towards himself, and exhorting her in future (together with her Nuns) to cultivate a more ideal standard of loyalty to the holy Rule. The result of this letter was a division in the camp. When the Abbot next visited his Nunnery, he found it in open revolt. The Prioress was full of grievances—one of which was the Superior's reluctance to make her Abbess of the Order—and she openly expressed her disinclination to be considered a religious Vice-Reine. More than half the Nuns had gone over to the Rebel Banner, only four remaining faithful to their Rule and their Abbot. Expostulation was useless, and Father Ignatius saw the necessity for prompt action, before the whole of his Community should be demoralised.

He determined to separate the faithful few from the

insubordinates, and to excommunicate the latter from the Order, including the Prioress. This intention he solemnly announced in choir, from the altar, calling on those who intended to be true to their vows, to come forward and stand before him. Four obeyed the summons, the rest electing to side with their Reverend Mother, and share her vicissitudes.

The Abbot then removed his four spiritual children from the company of their degenerate Sisters, and lodged them *pro tem.* in an outer portion of the Convent, under the charge of an Extern Sister, in whom he knew he could place confidence. This done, he set about seeking them a new residence, it being his purpose to shake off the dust of Feltham from his sandals, and leave the excommunicated Prioress with her flock in possession.

And at this point we touch upon an achievement—a five days' wonder—which can only be described as "Ignatian," for it represents one of the several records of subduing the impossible, which Father Ignatius *only* could have contributed to the archives of facts stranger than fiction.

Within *five days* from the date on which the division in the Nunnery occurred, the Reverend Father had seen and answered an advertisement, travelled to Devonshire, interviewed the owner of a certain picturesque old Chantry, signed the lease of the same, taken possession of it, and set about furnishing it, in time to receive the Community on the evening of the fifth day! To render this convulsive quick-change feasible, the upholsterer at Dartmouth had to be put upon his mettle, and a little party of willing countrywomen pressed into the service, to clean and superintend the setting-to-rights.

Slapton is a remote Devonian spot, and only to be reached by carriage from a somewhat distant hotel, (or at least it was so, a score of years back). When the Nuns arrived, they were met at the ferry from Kingswear by their Superior, who conducted them to their new home, where every detail was already in apple-pie order. Tea spread ready on the table, floors and stairs warmly covered

with cocoa-nut matting, and a well-aired bed awaiting each tired traveller—the work, from beginning to end, of *five* short days.

And here, in this pleasant Chantry, and well-beloved by the entire village, the Anglo-Benedictine Nuns lived an undisturbed and peaceful life, until the year 1881, when the lease having expired, the Community was removed to the Mother-House, Llanthony Abbey, or rather to that portion of it known now as the Priory of St. Scholastica.

I have already spoken in the last chapter, of the rude reception accorded the Reverend Father in this same year by the Archbishop of York at the Sheffield Congress, therefore I need only add a note concerning the Mission held by the Monk in this populous city, in the course of the same week. It was a marvellous time for blessings and conversions, especially amongst men. The Archbishop was petitioned again and again for the transference of these services from the halls to the churches, but he remained absolutely obdurate, and the Father continued to preach Jesus from the secular platform with overwhelming effect. Half the Congress left their debates, to flock to hear "the Monk of Llanthony;" and the crowds became so numerous, that the police had the utmost difficulty in keeping order and actually protecting life at the doors. It is impossible in a mere modicum of remaining space, to give due prominence to this or other Missions in these years of grace to many souls, but I must not close this chapter without rescuing one single detail from the mass of material that must be relentlessly sifted out, and left aside to make way for the next decade.

The scene was the "Costers' Church," St. Alphege, Southwark, (better known as Mr. Nugee's Church,) and the Father was in the midst of a Mission sermon to eight hundred specimens of the local humanity, gathered from all corners of that crowded but unaristocratic part of London. The appearance of a Monk in this work-a-day district, was a sight not to be missed, and the sermon being announced for the evening, there was nothing to prevent

breadwinners as well as idlers from making part of the congregation.

Father Ignatius had scarcely entered the pulpit and given out his text, before he "spotted," directly below him, a knot of five or six lads, deliberately shooting out their tongues, and making all manner of grimaces at his intention. His first impulse was to reprimand them, or request that they might be removed, but on second thoughts a touch of pity for their evident ignorance overcame him, and he had the satisfaction of seeing that gradually his words seemed to subdue and soften them, until at last they listened with rapt attention—especially the ringleader, a tall powerful-looking young rough, about seventeen years old. When, in conclusion, the Father dwelt on the exquisite love of Jesus for the vilest sinner, this lad's face was a revelation. His eyes were full of tears.

Immediately after the sermon he sought the Father in the vestry. "Oh, sir," he said breathlessly, "can it be true that Jesus would forgive the likes of me? I've been in prison and all sorts. I'm an awful bad lot." And the Monk answered gently, "He will forgive you this moment, if you ask Him." To his surprise, the boy went down on his knees then and there, and broke into a tearful prayer, which for rugged pathos and almost grotesque simplicity, the Reverend Father has seldom heard equalled. After a short talk, the lad moved away, having promised to "confess Jesus" amongst his late companions, whom he found waiting in amazement for him at the door. "Here, you chaps," he said bravely, "I've just come to Jesus, and He has received me! I want you all to come along to Him too."

Father Ignatius commended his poor convert to the attention of the clergy present, and inquired into his history. This the policeman knew most about. "A regular pest of the neighbourhood, sir," was his report. "The head of a gang of thieves—been in prison half a dozen times. *He ain't no good.*"

But the pessimistic policeman was wrong. The Rever-

end Father could not forget that wild pleading prayer, and indirectly he kept touch for some time with the one who prayed it.

That poor lad never lost his hold of the Redeeming Hand. He gave up his evil life, and became an honest, hard-working Christian. When last heard of, he was a member of the church choir, and a regular and devout communicant.

CHAPTER XLVI

"THE MOTHER OF JESUS"

"'Mid Llanthony's silent valleys,
O'er the meadows cool and green,
Mary comes in robes of silver,
Haloed, as the Angels' Queen."

WE are now about to touch the highest note in this biography—the Miracles of Llanthony! Were England a professedly Catholic country, these "signs from Heaven" would long since have been memorised by the faithful, in the shape of some costly shrine or monument built over the spot where the Apparition of the Virgin Mother was manifested, but as yet no public effort has been recorded towards the realisation of such an erection, though over twenty years have passed since the 30th of August 1880.¹

Once in every summer, on the day called "Apparition Festival," a concourse of many hundred pilgrims comes from all parts of the country, to visit the shrine in the Abbey Church which the Abbot has placed there, in commemoration of the visit of the Mother of Jesus to his mountain meadows. But at other times there is comparatively little general devotion shown, and Our Lady of Llanthony might indeed have cause to feel Herself forgotten, were it not for the zeal of the Community and those in the outer world who love to make Her shrine beautiful and invoke Her in their prayers.

¹ Since writing the above, and at the very moment of going to press, the Reverend Father sends me word that a marble statue of Our Lady of Llanthony is (D.V.) about to be erected on the place where she appeared in the Monastery meadow. This votive monument is to consist of a life-size Figure of the Blessed Virgin, holding in the right hand a Lamp which will burn perpetually night and day.—(AUTHOR.)

The causes of this seeming coldness are obvious. First, the national terror of associating the supernatural with the religious, so ingrained into the British temperament; and secondly, that callous indifference to things spiritual, which is one of the acute symptoms of the age.

At the time when these miracles occurred, they made a prodigious stir. It was hardly possible that it should have been otherwise, even in a Protestant country; but the clamour of opinion soon died down. The Press hailed it as a nine days' wonder, and a few polemical lecturers put it on their bills. Yet as far as devotional interest was concerned—well-nigh a blank. One Carmelite Friar wrote the Reverend Father a very kind letter on the subject, also a lady known to the public as the Nun of Kenmare; but, taken as a total, it mattered little to the average Britisher whether the Blessed Sacrament had really passed miraculously through the closed doors of the Tabernacle or not, much less whether the Mother of Jesus had appeared in the Monastery meadow, on four distinct occasions, and in sight of seven rational human beings.

Had these stupendous works of God been wrought in France or Belgium, Llanthony would to-day be on the line with La Salette, Lourdes, or Montaignu, where the miracles are no more astounding, neither is their validity better authenticated.

It was not my privilege to know Llanthony in the year 1880, therefore I am unable to build up this chapter on personal testimony. Nevertheless, I may affirm, that irrespective of the Reverend Father, I have been brought into close touch with the principal eye-witnesses of these glorious and mysterious phenomena, and especially with one—an English clergyman—who saw both miracles, and was able to give me an emphatic corroboration of the statement printed below. This statement is the official announcement, quoted from the Benedictine Calendar for 1881, wherein the miracles of Llanthony are recounted from the combined evidence of *those who saw them*, and in a form of words that is both approved and confirmed by the

Abbot. The original was written at Llanthony Abbey, and published in August 1881. It reads as follows:—

“It was on Monday, the 30th day of this month, that miraculous Visions of the Blessed Sacrament and of the Holy Virgin were vouchsafed to us here. There was not any expectation of anything unusual, every one was going about their duties in the usual way. Indeed, being Monday morning, the usual extra domestic engagements were rendering us unusually busy. Neither are we aware of there having been any peculiar amount of devotion in our midst. Suddenly, in the middle of Brother Dunstan’s watch before the Altar, the monstrance began to manifest itself outside the massive doors of the Tabernacle. Very shadowy at first, it gradually became perfectly distinct, and remained so for some time. This Vision continued when he left the watch desk, and the succeeding watcher in the outer church, Sister Janet, to her amazement saw the Apparition, but thought it nothing supernatural, imagining that for some reason or other the Reverend Father had left the monstrance out. Yet she was greatly pained at seeing none of the usual signs of reverence and devotion which accompany the exposition of the Host, viz., burning lights, vases of flowers, also the watcher vested in amice and alb. Directly after her watch, Sister Janet asked to see Brother Dunstan, who had preceded her. On his coming to the grate, she asked him, ‘Why is the Blessed Sacrament left out to-day?’ Then he told her what he too had seen, but that It was *not* left out, and the Tabernacle had not been opened. The Reverend Father was unwell that morning, and had not left his cell. The watch ended that day with Sister Janet. Brother Dunstan told the Reverend Father of what had happened, and after his interview with Sister Janet, on returning to the church at twelve for the mid-day Visit, the Apparition had passed away. In the evening of this Monday, August 30th, four of the boys were playing in the Abbot’s meadow between Vespers and Compline—it was just eight o’clock and still light, although getting dusk.

John Stewart, a boy of twelve and a half years, was waiting for his turn to run in the game, when he suddenly saw a bright dazzling Figure gliding across the meadow towards him. A halo of glory shone out from the Figure all around in an oval form. The Form was of a woman, a veil hung over the head and face, the hands were both raised as if in blessing. It approached very slowly. The appearance was like the pictures of the 'Immaculate Conception.' John Stewart called out to the other boys to look—Thomas Foord (11), Daniel Maguire (15), and Joseph Chalkley (9), all saw the Vision. Thomas Foord was very frightened, and cried out, saying, 'If it comes near me, I'll hit it.' This, we have since heard from Roman Catholic friends, is just what the boy said at La Salette. Little Thomas Foord certainly knew nothing of La Salette, but simply acted upon the impulse of the moment. They saw the beautiful Form enter the hedge, and after remaining there in the light for a few moments, it passed through the bush and vanished. The boys all ran round to the gate to look down the road the other side of the hedge, but the Vision had disappeared. They all ran in, in the greatest excitement, to tell us their tale. After this, we all watched every evening, but nothing was seen, Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday, or Friday. On Saturday the Superior left the Abbey for the Priory in Devonshire, where he had promised to take the parochial duty for the Vicar, who was to be absent for two Sundays. Leaving the express wish that we should continue the evening watch after he had left, we resolved soon after Vespers to go to the Abbot's meadow as on the previous evenings. The following is chiefly from the narration of Brother Dunstan:—'At a few minutes to eight I was upstairs trimming the choir lamp, when I heard Daniel Maguire calling to me; I instantly went to him, when he exclaimed, "Dear Brother, the light is in the bush." I looked and saw the bush, which was some hundreds of feet distant, full of bright light. We all went into the meadow; it was perfectly dark everywhere else. The bush was all aglow with light, presenting a most mysterious appearance.

We knelt opposite the bush, but some distance from it, and began to say prayers and sing hymns, but no Figure appeared. Presently I suggested that if it was really the Blessed Virgin who had appeared to the boys on Monday, possibly if we sang the "Ave Maria," she might again appear. So we began to sing the "Ave," and on our doing so, we at once perceived the Form of a woman surrounded by light at the top of the meadow by the gate. Slowly the Form and the light advanced, towards the already illuminated bush. Every now and then, as the Form advanced, we lost sight of it, and then it reappeared, until at last it stood before us in the bush, but sideways, the face and head covered with the veil as noticed by the boys on Monday. On coming to the words in the "Ave," "Blessed is the fruit of thy womb, Jesus," the light in the bush extended towards the right, and in the light appeared the Form of a Man unclothed save a cloth round the loins. His hands were stretched out towards the other Figure, whose hands were folded on the breast. As the Forms met, both vanished. Frequently after this, for we remained two hours in the meadow, the Form of the Blessed Virgin—for we quite concluded that it was absolutely Our Lord's Mother—frequently appeared as we repeated the "Ave Maria." Once Daniel Maguire cried out to us to look, for a light hovered over his head, and I saw in the light the Form of what I believe to have been an Angel. He did not see the Form, but exclaimed, "Something has touched my head and cured me of the pain." The boy was suffering much from headache at the time. The grass was wringing wet with a heavy dew, but we perceived that the ground in front of the bush where we knelt was both *dry* and *warm*. We remained in the meadow till ten o'clock. On Wednesday, the 8th of September, the Feast of the Nativity of the Blessed Virgin, the Vision of Our Ladye reappeared to Brother George (Mr. Swaine), Daniel Maguire, and Sister Janet, close by the Enclosure gates. When I heard their cry, I went to them, but although the light remained, the Form was gone. It reappeared as we all approached the light, but very indis-

tinctly. It flickered, as it were, in the light which moved before us to the now holy bush. On Tuesday, September 14th, the Reverend Father returned home. Nothing was seen on the night of his arrival, by himself or the persons he brought with him from Hereford. But some of us saw lights like stars in the Holy Bush. September 15 was the Octave of the Nativity of the Blessed Virgin. We had sung the last Vespers of the Feast. By eight o'clock it was very dark. Heavy clouds, and rain falling fast. By the Reverend Father's order, we all assembled at the Monastery porch to watch. The mountains looked black in the darkness, and all around was stormy night. A gentleman from Oxford was with us, a Mr. E. from Keble College. The Reverend Father told us to sing the “Ave Maria” three times, in honour of each Person of the Holy Trinity. Directly we began to sing, we observed outlines of bright forms flashing about in all directions, just side outlines of light, here, there, and everywhere in the Abbot's meadow, Monastery ground, and farm garden. We must have been fully a quarter of an hour singing the three “Aves,” for we paused between each, and in awed whispers commented on what we were seeing. *Then*, we could not imagine the meaning of what we saw, but afterwards we concluded that a cohort of Angels were assembling to welcome Blessed Mary, the Mother of their Lord, the Queen of Angels. The Reverend Father then said, “Now sing an ‘Ave’ in honour of the Blessed Virgin Herself.” We had no sooner begun it, than the whole heavens and mountains broke forth in bulging circles of light, circles pushing out from circles—the light poured upon our faces and the buildings where we stood, and in the central circle stood a most Majestic Heavenly Form, robed in flowing drapery. The Form was gigantic, but seemed to be reduced to human size as it approached. The Figure stood sideways, facing the Holy Bush. The Vision was most distinct, and the details were very clear; but it was in the “twinkling of an eye.” These are the witnesses of this mighty and glorious Vision—the Reverend Father Ignatius (Joseph Leycester Lyne),

Brother Dunstan (now an Anglican Priest), Brother George (now George Swaine, of Wisbeach), and Sister Janet (Janet Owen). This latter person was kneeling in the rain in the meadow at the time. A few moments after this, Mr. E., from Oxford, and one of the boys saw the shadowy Form of the Blessed Virgin in light, by the Enclosure gates, with uplifted hands. This is the last of the Visions vouchsafed by God's mercy to us. May His Holy Name be praised for this Confirmation of the Christian Faith in this age of unbelief! "

The reader will accept or reject the foregoing attestation, according to his individual measure of light.

I must now pass to the miraculous cures effected by the leaves (wild rhubarb) of the Holy Bush—the growth covering the spot where the Blessed Virgin was seen to linger longest, in each one of Her four Visitations.

As a memento of the Apparition, and without dreaming of further manifestations, the Reverend Father sent a leaf from this favoured plant, to each of his Nuns at Slapton, one of whom (the Mother-Mistress) was a great sufferer, having been crippled for thirty-eight years with a diseased hip bone, causing constant abscesses of a most terrible character. This lady received her leaf with the others, but owing to the fact that she had been brought up originally as a Dissenter, she retained a holy horror of "superstitious beliefs," and had some difficulty in reconciling the veracity of the Llanthony Miracles with the primitive lines of her own conscience. So she put her leaf scrupulously aside, and thought little more about it. Meanwhile her malady increased sensibly, and her sufferings became intolerable. Since early childhood, she had been unable to bend her leg, or put her foot to the ground, and the abscesses had gradually developed into a chronic open wound. The only way in which she could move was on crutches, and even then with severe pain and effort. One night, in her agony, she remembered Our Lady of Llanthony, and the leaf which she had carefully stowed away. She had no faith in the

power of the Blessed Virgin, therefore she scarcely dared to invoke Her aid. Yet, on the other hand, her misery was so great, her pain so cruel, that a strange longing seized her to throw her scruples to the wind, and cast herself then and there at the feet of the Queen of Mercy. Taking her rosary in her hand, she told her soul's story simply and truthfully, asking the Virgin Mother to obtain for her an increase of faith, and if possible, to have pity on her infirmity. Then she took the leaf reverently, and laid it on the sick limb. The moment she did so, her pain ceased, the abscesses which had been discharging copiously, dried up before her eyes, and the wound closed immediately. For the first time for many years, Mother Cecilia was able to walk without a crutch—in other words, she rose from her bed *cured*. From that day forward, she had no need of crutches, and she could walk as easily as the youngest of her Novices. These details are gathered from a written statement penned by the Nun herself, but which is too lengthy to reproduce in the original. Henceforth she was a child of Mary!

The news of this miracle spread like wildfire through Slapton, where the Nuns were much beloved, and the sad infirmity of the Mother-Mistress had been a source of heart-felt commiseration. When the tidings of her cure reached the village, the greatest excitement prevailed. A Mass of thanksgiving was offered by the Vicar in the parish church, and the bells were set pealing, in honour of so great and blessed an event.

Our Lady of Llanthony did not restrict Her sweet compassion to the Anglo-Benedictine Nun. Other cures hardly less startling, have been effected from time to time through the medium of the leaves of healing, yet strange to say, in few cases have the recipients of these benefits had the grace or courage to permit the publication of their experiences. There have been brilliant exceptions to this incomprehensible rule of reticence, but for the most part, all the letters which the Abbot has received in thanksgiving for cures wrought by the leaves from Holy Bush, have either been

marked "confidential," or else contained a direct request that their contents might be kept in solemn secrecy.

It may be imagined that the "Miracles of Llanthony" were an attractive theme for the Reverend Father's Mission sermons for some time to come. His own account of these occurrences, which he interprets as signs of Divine Approval and Protection, is to be found in a volume of orations which may always be obtained at the Abbey. In this present work, the Father has directed me to quote only the testimony of those who witnessed *all* the miracles, both the *one* appearance of the Blessed Sacrament and that of the Virgin Mother on *four* occasions. Father Ignatius did not see the miracle of the Altar, but he saw *one* Vision—the last—of the Mother of Jesus. Those interested in Dr. Pusey, may like to know that it was in the silver monstrance which had formerly been used in his oratory at Norwich by this great English Churchman, that the Sacred Host passed through the Tabernacle doors at Llanthony Abbey. Either directly or indirectly, it would seem that Dr. Pusey was never very far away from the momentous hours of his Monk-pupil's life.

The decade of the eighties was a time of many storms, and of golden rifts in the thunder clouds. Persecution, poverty, and physical collapse on the one hand, the Power of the Spirit and countless recruits for the Safe Side on the other. I am regretfully obliged to touch upon these events in groups instead of units, and even then, with a passing mention far below the plane of their importance. Unfortunately, my space-limit is not elastic, and I have still many leading chords that must be struck.

The year 1880 had its sad side. Added to the Monk's grief at his father's conduct, and the ruin which it threatened to bring upon his work, he had another sorrow—the treachery of a Monk-priest, in whom he had placed implicit confidence. This man, who up to the date of his desertion had always shown unusual zeal, both in obedience to the Rule, and his expressions of personal devotion to his

Superior, proved to be a terrible renegade, and a public scandal to the Order. One day, after having said Mass with apparently his usual decorum, he quietly walked himself out of Enclosure and down the Valley, where he was joined by another unfaithful member of the flock. This second individual, who was a woman, and a very dishonest one (having been caught "nipping" sovereigns from the Father's Mission plates), was an appropriate accomplice for the runaway Brother. Together, they became a serious source of annoyance to the Monastery, remaining in the neighbourhood, and circulating all sorts of infamous falsehoods respecting the Abbot and his Community. "Brother Aidan" even went so far as to threaten to smash every window in the Abbey, but this kindly intention was never put into practice. The man suddenly disappeared, and only emerged from oblivion several years later, when he unexpectedly turned up at one of the seaside Missions. In the interim he had shedded his "cloth," and (it is to be hoped) his evil life. Pushing his way into the Monk's waiting-room after one of the services, he threw himself on his knees, and begged forgiveness of the kind and patient Father whom he had so basely treated. "Don't you know me, Reverend Father?" he said pitifully. "I am that wretched Brother Aidan who behaved so infamously to you some years back. Will you say that you forgive me? I have had no peace since I left the Monastery, and I cannot rest without your pardon."

The suppliant's earnestness pleaded his cause more powerfully than any words, and the Reverend Father sent him away happy and forgiven, thereby adding one more entry in the record of the many, who have tried to ruin Llanthony, and subsequently been devoured by the fever of their own remorse.

While on this painful topic I may as well anticipate a somewhat similar event belonging to the category of 1885. This time the aggression was of a more public character, and emanated from a proselyted Protestant lecturer—at one time a most devoted friend of Llanthony, and a man

who had experienced nothing but hospitality and kindness at the Father's hands.

"Brother Somerset" dated from the Sheffield Mission of 1878. He was one amongst the countless assisted souls, of that wonderful week of blessings. For a time all went well, but owing to persistent pressure in the home-circle, and other contributive causes, a change manifested itself. Poor Brother Somerset was not only induced to declare himself of the Polemical persuasion, but also to assume the cudgels of his new cult, by becoming a Protestant Lecturer or "No Popery" crusader, under the banner of a certain naval commander, who had long since elected the Reverend Father to the post of one of Anti-Christ's best disciples.

Ex-Brother Somerset has not long since made his peace with Father Ignatius, and obtained an unqualified pardon of his past offences. Nevertheless, in the interests of a work purporting to be a biography, it is impossible to ignore the memorable cloud of dust raised by this misguided man, in the direction of the Monk's career. Knowing both Llanthony and its Abbot well, the Protestant proselyte was weak enough to pervert and distort this knowledge into weapons meet for the armoury of his new allies; and in this way, he was able to inflict on his former friend, an injury beyond the reparatory reach of all subsequent apologies, however well-intentioned or sincere.

It goes without saying, that this man's services were eagerly requisitioned by the abettors and patrons of his apostasy. He gave his eye-opening discourses in different populous centres, and on one occasion, towards the close of an important Mission at Southsea, he confronted the Reverend Father in the same town. While the Monk's Mission bills were still posted on the public hoardings, those of the Protestant party were put up beside them—a curious contrast, inasmuch as the latter were voiced in an openly personal key. Thus in the year 1885, both Father Ignatius and his traducer were advertised to appear at the Portland Hall, Southsea, almost simultaneously, the one to preach the Gospel, and the other to expose his former friend, the

Missioner. On the "Protestant" night the chair was to be taken by the local President of the Association (the naval commander already mentioned), and the lecturer was announced to be assisted by a lady—a very near relative.

Brother Somerset's attack was made on the ground of religion, but it was tantamount to a personal accusation of dishonesty, and intent to deceive the public. The object of the whole cabal was to show the deluded world that Father Ignatius was a Papist at heart, his teachings Popish, his practices still more so; in short, that he was a Jesuit of the double-dyed brand, and consequently a danger as well as an impostor. "The *real* Father Ignatius" was to have been the burden of these talks, had they been suffered to "come off," but the Reverend Father happened to be a popular personality in Southsea, and he possessed a strong side.

The Protestant faction refused to give the Monk a hearing. Knowing that he was to be "shown up" by his ex-disciple on a certain day and hour, the Reverend Father politely approached the Protestant President with a request to be allowed to face his accuser, and answer him publicly from the platform during the course of the lecture. But this the President declined to permit, whereupon a storm in a teacup ensued. Each "side" poured into the Hall when the eventful evening came, and when the President and lecturer appeared, they were greeted with a roar of conflicting cheers and hisses. The whole house was in disorder. Cries of "Ignatius!" "Let him speak!" and "Turn him out!" came from all sides, and it was in vain that the President tried to gain a hearing for the lecturer. The hubbub grew so loud and fiery, that ladies went into hysterics and fainted, while in more than one knot of controversialists, only the interference of the police kept back the men from exchanging blows as well as epithets. A scene of indescribable turmoil followed, which finally ended in the collapse of the entertainment. The next day, the Press had the nut between its teeth, and sensational copy was wound off by the mile. Some were for the Monk, some for the President, but all

were unanimous in declaring that a more disgraceful bear-garden had never been seen in Southsea.

The Monk finished his Mission to packed congregations, and his detractor pursued the lectures (at his expense) in less inflammatory localities. Ex-Brother Somerset was the means of bringing much distress and annoyance into the Reverend Father's life, but he is now heartily sorry for his past conduct, which he attributes to the persistent misrepresentations of certain unscrupulous clerics.

The translation of the Nuns from Slapton to Llanthony, furnished a bright light to the year 1881, likewise the entry into the Extern Sisterhood of one of the most familiar figures in the Reverend Father's latter-day *entourage*—Sister Annie, the faithful friend and benefactress of Llanthony, who until a week before her death (which occurred only last year) was an unfailing pillar of the Monk's Missions. May she rest in peace!

1882-83 were troublous times. In the first year, the Father held an historical Mission in Birmingham, which was vigorously opposed by the Diocesan, Dr. Philpotts (who conferred upon the Missioner the distinction of inhibition), and still more vigorously supported by the townsfolk—a concourse of many thousands who came eagerly to hear the Inspired Word. This was one of the record Missions in the preacher's life! Long before the hour announced for service, it was an impossibility to approach the Hall. Those who had obtained seats for the afternoon meetings, sat in them patiently till the evening, and hundreds were turned away at each service, for lack of space in which to stand or breathe. 1883 saw the Reverend Father at Cheltenham, confuting Pastor Chiniquy, the apostate Roman Priest, and engaging him in hand-to-hand conflict over Mariolatry and other vital subjects, in presence of Canon Bell and a representative assembly. In 1885 the Monk gave his first Mission in Westminster Town Hall—an occasion which presented special interest, inasmuch as Mr. Gladstone was one of the congregation, and the final Blessing was pronounced by the Bishop of Argyll and the Isles.

This year was rich in biographical detail. It included the Reverend Father's letters to the Press on the then burning topic of the proposed Disestablishment of the National Church—a step which he apostrophised as a "projected crime"—and his oration on the same subject, in St. James's Hall, before a crowded audience, filling every seat and corner, on the evening of the 18th of November.

The intervening interims were occupied with ceaseless Missions and home-labour at Llanthony Abbey; and in 1887 we find the Father once more in London, this time in Mr. Haweis' pulpit at St. James's, Marylebone, preaching the Passion to the patrons and *habituals* of that unconventional place of worship. A quaint side-light glimmers about this invitation from the author of *Music and Morals*, and it is worth recalling. The unorthodoxy of Mr. Haweis' religious opinions, had long found peculiar disfavour in the Father's eyes, and they had not infrequently served as a denunciatory parenthesis to the fiery periods of his sermons. One day at Ventnor, and unknown to the Reverend Father, Mr. Haweis was present at a crowded Mission service, and had the pleasure of hearing his own name invoked by the Monk, in a sense that was unflattering, to say the least.

Strangely enough, instead of resenting this personal allusion, Mr. Haweis must have relished it keenly, for he penned the preacher a most cordial letter, telling him that he would be "conferring a great benefit on himself and his people if he would occupy the pulpit at St. James's at the earliest convenient date." To this unlooked-for proposition, the Reverend Father replied in an equally friendly tone, accepting the invitation, on the proviso "that he should be free to say what he liked"—a condition that was instantly complied with.

Two more notable events, and the story of the eighties closes. In 1888 the Angel of Death bore away the Home-bound soul of the Abbot's father, and in 1889, the Abbot himself was elected a member of the Druidic Circle of Wales.

This interesting event took place at Brecon on the 29th

of August, immediately after the Reverend Father's oration to the National Eisteddfod of South Wales. The ceremony was performed before the Gorsedd, in presence of 12,000 people, the Arch-Druid Clwydfordd himself tying the white ribbon on the Monk's arm, and bestowing on him his Druidic title of Dewi Honddu—David of the Honddu.

On this occasion the solo verses of the National Anthem were sung by the Queen of Song—the one and only Adelina Patti.

CHAPTER XLVII

"A FAR JOURNEY"

"Come let us blow the Clarion loud,
The Gospel trumpet clear,
And fling the sounds of Mighty Love
Around us, far and near!"

THE year 1890 was not two months old, before a report of the Reverend Father's death was circulated in the English Press. Led off by the *Pall Mall Gazette*, a perfect flutter of obituary notices appeared in the leading newspapers, together with the portrait of the "late" Abbot, who at that moment happened to be preaching a Mission at Abergavenny, in aid of the local charities. This untoward occurrence caused the Father no end of annoyance and expense, besides placing him in the unique position of reading, and commenting on, his own *oraison funèbre*—a two-sided privilege not granted to many. Fourteen pounds sterling were disbursed at the Abbey in stamps and telegrams alone, for the influx of correspondence provoked by this misleading rumour, was in itself a source of severe labour and expense.

All over England the tidings produced a vibration. The Monk's followers were heart-broken, and many of his friends sent beautiful floral offerings for his funeral. The perpetrator of this unseemly joke (if joke it was) has never yet been discovered, though the Reverend Father, with the assistance of one or two kindly editors, did his utmost to track him to earth. A very amusing rebuff to Spiritualism is connected with this incident. A certain person who had known the Monk of Llanthony, happened to be present at a *séance* on the day when the news of his death was

announced. "Materialisations of departed spirits" was the special feature of the entertainment, and this individual was asked by the Medium to name some deceased "party" with whom he would like to converse. "Father Ignatius" was his choice, and accordingly the spirit of the (supposed departed) preacher was conjured to materialise itself and appear.

And "*something*," said by the person in question to have borne the Father's form, face, and voice, *did* appear forthwith. Moreover, it discoursed on religious topics, with a degree of eloquence which in itself established its identity. This interesting "manifestation" was naturally hurried into print, and great was the dismay of the mystic circle when they learned that their "spook" had had them all on toast.

"This proves more than ever," says Father Ignatius, "that these materialisations are diabolical. Of course it was a demon that took my shape and acted a lie, but he must have been a very *stupid* demon too, or he would have known better what was going on in the world."

The next event of importance, in the same year, was the Reverend Father's thirteen months' Mission in America. This journey was taken with a double purpose—as a means of carrying the Gospel into a magnificent field of labour, and likewise as a pretext for inducing the Monk to follow his doctor's prescription, of benefiting by the repose and breezes of a transatlantic voyage. At this time Father Ignatius was in a very critical state of health. Anxiety and exhaustion had made terrible havoc within, and his medical adviser was obliged to tell him, that unless he would consent to go right away for a definite period, a break-down for good and all was inevitable.

The Father's friends rallied round him loyally at this painful crisis, and a "purse" was started, which resulted in a sum of £437, it being well known that the Llanthony coffers would be hopelessly inadequate to furnish the means for so necessarily costly an undertaking. By this timely gift, the Reverend Father was able to start away with a

comparatively easy mind, taking with him one of his Monks, two secretaries, and the Mission Sister, (Sister Annie).

A volume giving a detailed account of this wonderful Mission, has already been offered to the public by the Monk who accompanied his Superior throughout the tour. It was published in 1893 by John Hodges (Agar Street, Strand) under the title of *Father Ignatius in America*, and is still read with much interest, by friends on both sides of “the puddle.”

As the above work comprises not only a diary of the Missioner's movements, but likewise an exhaustive collection of his most remarkable sermons, I shall merely summarise this glimpse of the New World in the briefest way possible.

Father Ignatius set foot in America on the 21st of June 1890, and he re-embarked for England on the 11th of July in the following year. In the interim, he had preached in well-nigh every city of importance to be found upon the map, between New York and far-away Florida. During this triumphal progress, he had likewise tested the Christian courtesy of no less than fourteen transatlantic Bishops, five of whom he found antagonistic, one of a divided mind, and eight who received him as a man sent from God.

In Great Britain, the Monk of Llanthony invariably restricts his “appearances” to Church of England pulpits, or the secular platform. In obedience to national Canon Law, he never preaches in the places of worship, or attends the functions, of any denomination saving the one in which he holds the Diaconate. Across the ocean however, this obligation was no longer binding, and the Reverend Father can quote a record of all sorts and conditions of centres, from whence he has sounded the Gospel-bugle, which I doubt any other living preacher to be capable of out-stepping, or even of showing the like.

When I state that he has delivered sermons in Mr. Moody's Tabernacle, the Salvation Army barracks, a Roman Catholic seminary, and on Jewish platforms, I shall

have only gathered a random sheaf of names from a long and heterogeneous index, which includes the churches or chapels of the Episcopalians, Methodists, Baptists, and even Unitarians. In these last, Father Ignatius only consented to address the congregation, on condition that he might preach the indisputable Godhead and Atonement of Our Lord Jesus Christ.

On his first appearance over the water, the Monk-Missioner was looked upon with a good deal of distrust by all schools of religion. No one seemed able to fathom his motives, or realise his denomination. His black habit, sandals, and shaven crown, were subjects of bewilderment that were construed into a significant domino, worn to disguise some mystery.

But the clouds soon lifted. The power and beauty of his simple Message, laid low the barriers of prejudice or apprehension with a single breath. Before he had been one week under the star-spangled banner, the Abbot of Llanthony's name was on every lip, in every newspaper, and the whole continent was ringing with the tidings of the stranger-Monk, who had crossed the great sea to carry his Master's Gift to the children of Independence and magnificent Freedom.

After the first foothold was gained, the enthusiasm became general. From President Harrison and his family downwards, all America vied with itself to offer the Reverend Father every imaginable courtesy and hospitality, while his Missions, no matter where they were preached, were packed to overflowing. Of the American Press, Father Ignatius speaks with the utmost appreciation and gratitude. It is true that he suffered many things in the way of fatigue, by reason of the swarm of interviewers by whom he was shadowed in all the leading cities, but this was only the natural penalty of notoriety, and the Father specially underlines the fact, that in nearly every case these reporters interpreted him very accurately and fairly—an advantage which has not always been accorded him in the old country.

Bishop Paddock, the Diocesan of Massachusetts, did his utmost to trample out the Monk's Mission in its earliest days, but he failed signally, owing to the more Christian attitude of many of the other Bishops, and the extraordinary power of "drawing men unto him" which the Father seemed to possess, from the very outset of his progress through the States. In Canada, the Monk's reception was especially gratifying. At Quebec he was the guest of the Bishop—a delightful Welshman—to whom it seemed a real privilege to entertain the "Welsh" Monk, and pilot him in person to preach in the great English Church of the city. In the same capital, the Reverend Father received two notable cordialities from his Roman brothers in Christ. The Cardinal Archbishop invited him to a private audience—a pleasure that from sheer physical exhaustion he was forced to forego—and the Superior of the Seminary of Christian Brothers begged him to give an address to the students before leaving, which he accordingly did, and with most refreshing results.

It is impossible, in this rapid review, to include one half of the notable "points" of a Mission which lasted thirteen months, and included in its itinerary, a comprehensive sweep over much of the American territory. I shall only touch upon the incidents which appeal to humanitarian interests and the "needfuls" of Christianity, leaving the reader the option of referring to Father Michael's admirable little volume for a more detailed account of this eventful year and a month.

One of the Reverend Father's preoccupations while in America, was the welfare of the Indian tribes. At Quebec, in company with the Bishop, he visited the settlement of the Hurons at Lorette. While in Florida, he preached on behalf of the Seminole tribes, and at Philadelphia he addressed a company of Sioux in the public circus, where they were engaged as part of the show. "Hoop-Hawk" and "Black Bear," (two famous chiefs,) were among this troupe, and appeared to take the keenest interest in the words which their White Brother spoke to them (through a

cowboy interpreter) of "the Great Spirit, and the Happy Hunting-Ground, which we pale-faces call Heaven."

On leaving, the Monk offered each Indian present a little souvenir. To the "braves" he gave a small crucifix, to the squaws a picture of the Blessed Virgin, and to the papooses (of whom there were many) each a little rosary of glittering glass beads. At the White House, Washington, when received in private audience by President Harrison, the Reverend Father made the interests of the Redskins a special topic of conversation, entreating the Leader of the Great People, to consider more deeply the cause of these maltreated tribes, by the protective measure of prohibiting the sale of spirits amongst them, and, on the other hand, providing them with the means of legal redress, against the many wrongs they suffered at the hands of self-seeking authorities.

Another local source of sorrow to the Monk, was the discovery of flagrant infidelity among certain members of the Episcopal Church, and the laxity with which this species of high-treason was blinked at by more than one apostolic overseer. In respect to "heresy-hunting" in America, Father Ignatius did a lasting and self-sacrificing work. Not only did he stir somnolent Christianity to a sense of the danger and degradation of a blind toleration of professional unbelief in the land, but even months after he had himself returned to England, the seed which he had sown brought forth its fruit, in the shape of official censure being passed on those who openly propounded their crusades against Bible and creeds.

But in thus tracking and exposing evil-doing among the clergy, Father Ignatius was obliged to undermine the pedestal of more than one popular idol, and in so doing he had to pay the penalty of the initiative. The first celebrity to come under the ban of the Father's cudgel, was Dr. Heber Newton, the Rector of All Souls', New York City, and one of the greatest orators in the States. Dr. Newton's heresies needed no "hunting," for they were boldly expressed in his volumes of printed sermons.

When a clever and popular man (receiving his Church's salary) publishes the statement that "God the Son was as much incarnate in Jesus Christ as in Martin Luther," it is surely high time that some one should present him to his Bishop for inquiry—not to say, chastisement. And Father Ignatius being emphatically of this mind, he lost no time in convulsing the atmosphere of public opinion around the favourite preacher. In so doing he knowingly took the odds of injuring his own popularity, but this did not deter him. A certain section held aloof from his Missions, and the "offerings" for Llanthony showed a very depressing figure, yet he neither slumbered nor slept in spirit, until he had called out the Christians of America to join with him in placing a fashionable unbeliever before the judgment-seat of his Diocesan. Bishop Potter showed no inclination to interfere with the "whims" of the Rector of All Souls', but the matter was practically taken out of his hands. Between the fires of urgent petitions signed by countless pens and a decided stir in an influential quarter of the Press, he could not do otherwise than appoint a Committee of Inquiry to sift and deal with the peculiar theology of the learned Doctor. Before the Reverend Father sailed for England, he had the consolation of knowing that Heber Newton's days of unchecked infidelity were fast merging into an official twilight which promised to be more shadow-strewn than star-lit.

Another unfaithful preacher of the Word—a certain Dr. Rainsforth—and the famous Phillips Brooks, who succeeded Dr. Paddock in the Bishopric of Massachusetts, fell likewise within the radius of the Monk's denunciations. Father Ignatius has never been a respecter of persons, and he had but one object in view—the wholesale purging of his Church, *i.e.* the expulsion of those who degraded their sacred calling into a mere learned profession, no matter whether the offenders were Archbishops or Deacons.

Humanly speaking, the Reverend Father cut the financial throat of his Mission, by bearding these transatlantic lions in the strongholds of their native dens.

Superhumanly speaking, in so doing he dealt one of the most historical blows in his lifetime's record—a blow which has left a monumental scar upon the face of the world's up-to-date continent.

Many well-known Americans are still writing to the Abbot of Llanthony, with urgent entreaties that he will "come and finish his work amongst them." None seem to have forgotten him, and few to have resented the whirlwind which he raised within the temples of their household gods. America is the country of great minds as well as great achievements. No one is more ready to endorse this statement than the Missioner, who for more than one consecutive year carried the sword as well as the olive branch into the magnanimous flutter of the stars and stripes.

When Father Ignatius embarked for home on the 11th of July, he had the satisfaction of knowing that he had held soul-saving Missions in the greatest cities of the wide American world. This index comprised New York, Boston, Quebec, Fort Myers, Washington, Philadelphia, and Chicago, besides many intervening places too numerous to mention.

Crossing the Savannah River, *en route* for Washington, (from Florida,) the Reverend Father very nearly lost his life. The floods were out, and midway across the long stretch of tressel-work bridge, the train containing the Mission group was brought to a stand. This was partly owing to the depth of water which surrounded the engine, but still more to the perilous state of the bridge, which had been terribly endangered by the force of the swollen river. For some time the situation was critical in the extreme, and the Father says that he will never forget the dreadful grandeur of the sight—the rush of the seething waters, heard and seen in the dimness of the night, and the pervading thought, that in another moment they might be hurled headlong into the abyss below—the mighty Savannah River.

It was one of those half-hours that are destined to live for ever.

God's mercy at length intervened! After an anxious time of prayer and waiting, the train was enabled to advance at a snail's pace, and in time the nightmare was left behind.

Two sad pieces of home news contributed to cast a shadow on the latter part of the Reverend Father's holiday of labour. One cable informed him, that his Nuns, no longer able to bear the strain of their spiritual isolation, had left Llanthony, and sought consolation in a Roman Catholic Convent. These long-suffering women had been left for months without the Sacraments, owing to the presence of no Priest in the Monastery; and when, as a last resource, they had written to the Bishop of St. David's, entreating him to send one of his clergy to give them Communion, he had ignored their appeal. By order of the Holy Father, a "Te Deum" was sung in the Chapel of the Irish College, Rome, in honour of the reception into the Papal fold of these forlorn ladies.

The second message was still more sorrowful. A certain Sister Mary Agnes, (one of the Anglo-Benedictine Novices,) who after a seventeen years' probation, had been dismissed as unsuited to religious life, had in retaliation for this dismissal, penned a volume purporting to be her experiences during the Novitiate so unhappily prolonged.

This book, published under the title of *Seventeen Years in an English Nunnery*, is no personal attack on Father Ignatius, but on the other hand it is an incongruous and contradictory tissue of side-thrusts, calculated to ruin him by reflex inference, through the direct scandal which it imputes to the work of his life—his Order. I am directed to touch very lightly on this lamentable want of loyalty in one whom to this day the Reverend Father always speaks of with unmitigated kindness and affection. Most of my readers will doubtless have turned the leaves of the volume in question, therefore I need not stay to illuminate its contents. It gives me far greater pleasure to pass to the sequel, and add that this little ex-Sister not only subsequently expressed her contrition at having been coerced by

Protestant influence to put her name to so unworthy a work, but she did the next best thing in her power to repair her wrong-doing—she withdrew what remained of the edition, and stated her reasons for doing so in the public Press.

Father Ignatius never descended to an elaborate defence of the outrageous charges, implied rather than expressed, in this cruel publication. "Those who are really my spiritual children," he argued, "will know what to believe; and as for the rest, what can it matter?"

And with that, he dismissed the subject from everywhere save his own heart. Last of all, Sister Agnes most earnestly sought re-admission to Llanthony. I have myself seen her letter to this effect.

An enormous concourse of friendly Americans gathered on the quay to give the Monk-Missioner his valedictory God-speed. Prayers, tears, and blessings formed his farewell chorus, and the *Arizona* steamed out of the wharf, amid a storm of hats and handkerchiefs, which the Reverend Father answered by waving a star-spangled banner with great energy. Before the vessel passed out of sight, the crowd on land chanted a solemn Doxology, in honour of the great thirteen months' Mission, and its Pioneer who had carried the axe.

At Queenstown the Monk left the ship, and proceeded overland, crossing finally from Kingstown to Holyhead, and thus touching home on Welsh soil.

The journey to Llanthony was made by easy and interesting stages through North Wales. Everywhere, the Welsh natives received their Monk with unmitigated pleasure and respect, and at Llangollen he stayed to preach a short Mission at the Assembly Rooms, by special request of the parish Rector. These three simple services were provocative of the one and only discord which occurred to break the harmonious serenity of this joyous home-coming.

The gauntlet came from the Bishop of St. Asaph!

Hearing that the Reverend Father was to preach at Llangollen Church, this zealous dignitary caused a writ of inhibition to be served upon him, not even deigning so much as to state his reasons for proceeding to so drastic an extremity.

This unchristian rebuff from one of his so-called fathers in God, was the only really jarring note which crossed the Abbot of Llanthony's otherwise enthusiastic reception, in the land of the Cymry.

The year 1892 was one of sickness and shadows. The Reverend Father's health was in an alarmingly shattered condition, and the pressure of business was hopelessly prohibitive of any possibility of rest. Early in the year, a report of his secession to Rome gained currency, and this alone produced a hurricane of protest and congratulation, which had to be answered by innumerable and weary letters. A little later, the Monk's kind arbitrator and uncle, Augustus Leicester, was stricken with his last illness, and his nephew had to hurry across country to Whiteplace, in order to give him the comfort of his presence in the supreme moment. These conflicting events tended to exhaust the Reverend Father's already sorely tried nerves, and he became so ill on his return to Llanthony, that Masses were offered for his recovery, and all prospective Missions cancelled till further notice.

In contrast to the foregoing, 1893 was a record year in the Monk's life. It was a time which bristled with events. In January he prepared his Petition to Convocation against the toleration of the Higher Criticism in the National Church, and in the following month he took it with him to Oxford, where in the course of a remarkable Mission to the University, he elicited innumerable signatures to this already crowded page of protest. St. Mary's Church—the Church of the University—was the scene of the Monk's labours, and he succeeded in filling it from door to ceiling with men only—a feat which had not been achieved, said the local papers, "within living memory." The Colleges must have emptied themselves into the church. Professors, Dons, and undergraduates alike, they

all gathered to hear the simple words spoken by this strangely garbed preacher, in a silence which a breath might have broken—the silence that betokens power and arrest. The Reverend Father had little difficulty in commending his Petition to his 'Varsity hearers. When, in the August of the same year, it was finally presented to Convocation by the Bishop of Gloucester, the scroll had assumed proportions which did honour to the Christianity of England, and the energy of its promoter.

I shall conclude this chapter, by recurring to the *Lux Mundi* incident at the Birmingham Congress, October 5th, 1893.

Up to a very few days before this date, the Reverend Father had not felt called by God to go to Birmingham, but a dream, which he interpreted as a summons, made him decide at the eleventh hour to do so.

The *Westminster Gazette* of February 27th, 1902, in referring to this Vision, summarises it in very concise language, which I cannot do better than borrow:—"As he (Father Ignatius) was going to sleep, he seemed to be carried from the mountains and the solitude of his cell, and powerful hands bore him over several cities. He heard a Voice saying, 'Look down,' and he saw all the sin and misery, wretchedness and squalor of human life. He heard the Voice again saying, 'Look, look,' and he looked and said, 'That is Gloucester Cathedral, and that Worcester,' and he saw Worcester Cathedral falling over. And the Voice told him 'to come to the Congress as a witness, to save the Church of Worcester from a terrible fall.' So he obeyed and came."

Father Ignatius is not, and never has been, a preacher or practiser of half measures. He came to Birmingham to work and work quickly. In the first place, he caused a public protest to be printed, and distributed in the Hall of Congress, calling on "Christians" to rise and declaim against the impropriety of the Editor of *Lux Mundi* being accepted, as one of the Readers at a Christian Congress, or failing this, to leave the Hall in a body.

When the Monk made his appearance in person, Canon Fremantle was in the act of concluding his speech, and the Rev. Charles Gore was about to be called upon to replace him. This was the signal for which the Reverend Father had waited. Carrying a copy of *Lux Mundi* in his hand, he walked up to the platform and said his say, amidst cheers and hisses, and loud cries of "Ignatius!" "Don't be afraid, Father!" "God bless you, Father Ignatius!" and other expressions of mixed sentiments.

"The Editor of this book," said the Monk loudly, "is not fit to stand or sit in this assembly, until he has publicly recanted every word of his Essay in it."

A noisy and conflicting demonstration followed this assertion, whereupon, after a hasty confab, two ushers approached the Reverend Father and begged him to resume his seat, giving him at the same time a written paper from the Bishop, promising him a hearing later in the programme. Upon this promise, the Reverend Father consented to postpone his address, and sat quietly through the reading of Canon Gore's paper, and one or two other speeches from clergymen, whose cards the Bishop assured him had been presented before his own. But as time went on, and unmistakable signs of a wind up of the proceedings became apparent, it suddenly dawned upon the Monk that he had been tricked into silence, by means of a base subterfuge. He sprang to his feet, and reminded Dr. Perowne of his promise, but that dignitary nervously evaded the question by replying that, inasmuch as the Father's speech would only embody a personal attack, he could not permit it to be spoken, and the meeting would forthwith be closed.

This deliberate recantation of a written pledge, was too much for the patience of the Monk, or the audience. The whole Hall rose in protest, while Father Ignatius mounted straightway to the platform, confronting the Bishop with his own slip of paper. "Your lordship has grossly misrepresented me," he said, in a voice which could be heard in the farthest corner of the building. "I hold your written promise that I should address this assembly, and I

claim my right. It is not the prerogative of a Bishop to tell deliberate falsehoods." And his plain speaking was answered by a thundering round of applause.

The Bishop was in a difficulty. No amount of persuasion would induce the Monk to beat a retreat. "I will only leave this platform," said he, "when I am forcibly removed from it by the police—not before." Whereupon the audience again applauded him to the echo.

In the end—whether by Dr. Perowne's instructions, or the intervention of some officious occupant of the platform, history does not relate—the Mayor of Birmingham and an officer of the police force *did* appear upon the scene, and they approached the Reverend Father with great respect but still greater embarrassment. "Very sorry, sir," began the constable awkwardly. But the Monk cut him short with a beaming smile. "All right, Inspector," he said cheerily; "it isn't *your* fault. *You're* all right! Do you want me to go? Very well, I will; but you must take me by the shoulder first."

And with that—his mission being ended—he descended from the platform, the Bishop seizing the opportunity to pronounce the Benediction, by way of setting the seal upon an episode, which must always leave a very suggestive mark of interrogation against the invariable integrity of those clothed in "the little brief authority" of the Anglican Purple Robe.

As Father Ignatius passed down the Hall, he was awarded a sympathetic but noisy ovation. The hands of many were stretched out to grasp his own, and a large number of the audience left their seats to accompany him to the door.

Only one old lady, whom he encountered at his exit, seemed to hold a different view of the affair. "What a pity it is, you don't know how to behave!" she said severely, as the Monk passed her by.

And this golden saying raised a laugh, in which the Father himself was the first to join right merrily.

CHAPTER XLVIII

"A PRIEST FOR EVER"

"Like the crystal dewdrop
On the evening flower,
Let Thy Holy Spirit
Rest on us this hour."

WHEN the Reverend Father left the Congress Hall after his "brush" with the President, it was with no intention of seeking a restful calm after the storm. That same evening he held a meeting on a gigantic scale, at the Exchange Rooms of Birmingham. Between Congress members and townsfolk, the Hall was packed to overflowing, hundreds being turned from the doors by the police.

The Monk's oration, on this occasion, was a topical one. He explained his presence in the city, and the vital cause which had brought him there. At its conclusion an overwhelming ovation awaited him. So uncontrolled was the demonstration, that it threatened to become positively dangerous. Father Ignatius had the greatest difficulty in temporising with the ardour of his sympathisers, and effecting his own escape—to rest.

Such a day of perpetual strain and excitement would have annihilated many a stronger but less determined man.

In more than one way, the year 1893 was an historical landmark in this biography. It included many prominent and important features, besides being the definite date of the Reverend Father's public declaration of war to the "Findings of the Higher Criticisms." After sending in his voluminous Petition to Convocation, and leaving his glove with the President of the Church Congress, Father Ignatius, in his quality of "Heresy Hunter," may be said to have

gone on from strength to strength and (in a Christian sense) from glory to glory. The year had likewise been rich in events of a less emotional nature. On the 26th of April, by request of Canon Benham, the Monk made his reappearance at St. Edmund's, Lombard Street, clad in full Benedictine canonicals, and after an absence of twenty-three years. This *rentrée* held a twofold interest, not only from the associations connected with St. Edmund's in the Father's days of persecution, but also from the fact that Canon Benham, who in former years had publicly spoken of the Monk as "an ignorant charlatan," should now be the very man to invite him to his pulpit and bid him "boss the whole service"—a faithful reproduction of the Incumbent's original phraseology.

This service was attended by a compressed host of City magnates and employés, and it was likewise the means of drawing together a great many celebrities of altogether another calibre. Several well-known members of the clergy, who had known the preacher in the early days of his career, were present to welcome their old friend, among the heterogeneous "types" of this representative congregation. A lengthy Mission in the London churches followed closely on this date, likewise the formation of an acquaintance which may well be called one of the most disastrous that the Reverend Father has ever been unfortunate enough to make.

Mr. James Marchant was a lecturer in the service of the "Christian Evidence Society," and the Monk was first attracted towards him by reading and hearing of a spirited defence of Christianity, which he had made, in answer to the Atheistic attacks of one of Mr. Bradlaugh's subordinates. Father Ignatius wrote Mr. Marchant a kindly letter on the subject, and the first step leading to another, this individual soon found his way to Llanthony, where by his own desire, at the close of his final visit, he was enrolled in its Associate Brotherhood. Believing "Brother James" to be a sincere champion of the Faith, the Reverend Father treated him with the most unremitting kindness, placing the Monastery



IN THE MONK'S CLOISTER GARDEN, LEANINGY

at his disposal, as an unfailing home when out of work ; and, in short, lavishing on him every care and attention that a generous heart could conceive. For a time, Mr. Marchant repaid this hospitality by crossing swords with some of the Monk's detractors, who like himself earned their bread by the utterance of their opinions. But this apparent sensibility was nothing better than a blind on the part of a rogue.

Before a year was out, Mr. Marchant added a new feature to his lecture programme—a most shameful attack on the Pope and the Western Communion. The Reverend Father finding expostulation useless, promptly excommunicated his Associate from the Anglo-Benedictine Order. For the same cause Mr. Marchant received an intimation from the "Christian Evidence Society" that his name had been removed from their staff.

From this moment, the true nature of the man asserted itself. After the manner of ex-Brother Somerset, he took refuge in the Polemical Bosom, and emerged therefrom a fully fledged Protestant, with an aim in life—to "expose" the "real" Father Ignatius.

Mr. Marchant's persecution of the Reverend Father lasted over several years, and it was very fiery and plausible. The ingrate made capital out of his intimacy with Llanthony, his knowledge of its Rule and customs, and he presented himself to the public as the pendant to Sister Mary Agnes, whose book he quoted profusely in his expositions—a presumption against which, she sent her indignant protest to the Press. The accusations which he levelled against the Abbot himself, were of the gravest. "He had severed his connection with the Monastery," said he, "on account of the scandalous life lived by its Monks," inclusive of the Superior, whom he represented parenthetically as seldom if ever sober. "It was high time," he averred, "that the Government should take steps to investigate this sink of iniquity, beginning with the excavation of the enclosed Garth, and the unearthing of the bodies buried there."

These "revelations," unblushingly uttered by a Protestant convert in a Protestant country, and treading as they did upon the heels of *Seventeen Years in an English Nunnery*, proved to be a source of intense suffering and injury to the central figure of these pages. For a long time, Father Ignatius faced the music in silent contempt, then at last the moment came when for the honour of monasticism he was forced to draw the weapon of defence. Mr. James Marchant had been a trifle too clever. He had forgotten the existence of certain letters written by his own hand, at a date *later* than that of his last stay at Llanthony—letters that brimmed over with expressions of edification and gratitude, and were little else than rigmaroles of ecstatic devotion to "the dear holy place."

One day, when least expected, Father Ignatius saw fit to "loan" these letters to the Press, after which date his tormentor took to submersion, and has not since regained the surface.

To the outside reader, these details may only represent so many gnat stings, to be winced at and forgotten, but to a public character and a man of the Reverend Father's temperament, they meant an intensity of suffering for body and soul.

On December 8th, 1893, Father Ignatius made a flying visit to Oxford, for the purpose of suggesting to the University the incongruity of its recent action—the laying to rest of Professor Jowett with "Christian" honours. Thirty years before, Dr. Pusey had said of the Master of Balliol that "if there was any truth in his teachings, there was nothing left for Christians to believe," and upon this standpoint the Monk built his speech. It was a bold step to denounce the most popular man in Oxford, who was scarcely cold in his grave, before a crowded gathering of his own disciples and parasites, but the Reverend Father felt called upon to strike this blow for the Faith and for honesty. As the translator-in-chief of the works of Plato, Dr. Jowett has ever held a specially heavy load of responsibility in the Monk's estimation. The views of Father

Ignatius on this complex question are too well known to need comment. It is no secret that he attributes much of the moral degradation of the youth of England, to the dissemination of certain pernicious classics in the educational centres or institutions of the land. Plato may be described as (next to Satan) the Father's horror-in-chief. It cannot therefore be a matter of surprise, that the apotheosis of Plato's perpetuator, should have furnished this alert Watchman with a Message of warning to those who had been the learned Professor's admirers, and were perhaps in danger of becoming also the victims of his memory.

The Reverend Father indulged in some very plain speaking to the Oxford students, but they could not gain-say him. He judged Dr. Jowett by the legacy of his own words, and though many of his hearers bitterly resented the attack on their demagogue, they could not confute its logical justice. Determined attempts to make a scene were manifested in the most critical period of the lecture, and the interruptions became so loud and violent, that the Monk had to end the meeting without finishing his address.

It was on this same occasion, that by a mere coincidence, the "peculiar" doctrines of the Dean of Ripon (then Canon Fremantle) were for the first time brought to the Reverend Father's notice.

The Missions of 1894 were many and brilliant, and embodied a vigorous defence of the Bible, and a challenge to Christians to rally round the Word of God. In the beginning of the year, Father Ignatius received a letter from one of the clergy of the Manchester diocese, announcing that his Bishop had publicly approved the teaching of the Higher Critics, and had recommended the same to his priests and Sunday-school teachers. "Would the Reverend Father preach a Mission in the diocese, and protest against so great a calamity?"

This was one of the many times in the Monk's life, when theoretical zealots have shown him the ruddy blaze and the roasting chestnuts, and left him single-handed to extricate the red-hot morsels from between the bars.

Father Ignatius hurried to Manchester, and put a tremendous question to its inhabitants: "Must I believe Jesus Christ or the Bishop?" This was the gist of his Mission, and its very simplicity clothed it with extraordinary power. So many of the clergy were on the Father's side, that he met but little official opposition; and as for the laity, he carried them with him, as the wind carries the leaves. In the twinkling of an eye, a respectfully worded Petition was drawn up, expressive of sorrow at the Bishop's publicly spoken sentiments, on so vital a subject as the Authenticity and Inspiration of the Christians' Bible, and suggesting that an immediate resignation on his lordship's part would be both an honourable and dignified solution of an urgent difficulty. This document, bearing the signatures of a small army of clerics and seculars, was duly presented to the Diocesan, who needless to say, did not evince any disposition to profit by the hint.

The reception of the Monk of Llanthony by the people of Manchester was enthusiastic to the verge of frenzy. After leaving the Hall at the conclusion of his final address, a dense crowd of "disciples" surrounded his cab, and in spite of the efforts of the police, literally tipped it up, in their efforts to swarm round him for a final word or grasp of the hand. As an imperative alternative from being helplessly overturned, cab and all, the Reverend Father met this emergency by holding his arms out of the windows of the vehicle, and in this manner satisfying the demand, by abandoning his hands left and right, to the indiscriminate grips of the multitude.

The Monk's next quarry in his pursuit of salaried Infidelity, was the newly appointed Examining Chaplain to the diocese of Southwell, the author of a book on the Old Testament, calculated to undermine the infallibility of the Scriptures and the teachings of Our Lord concerning them. Father Ignatius went on this quest to Nottingham, exposed Dr. Driver's doctrines in the course of a Mission, and headed a petition to the Bishop, soliciting the substitution of a

sounder representative, as the official guide to orthodoxy, set to direct and manipulate the studies of candidates for Holy Orders.

It was at Nottingham, during the heat of this Mission, that the erroneous report was floated that Father Ignatius had made use of the following words in the course of a sermon: "Let the Bishop go to the Devil." This was a misrepresentation, for which the Monk was indebted to a local critic, and the sentence is not infrequently quoted against him to prop up imputations of a latent tendency to disrespect. What the Father really *did* say was this: "If it comes to the question of deciding between Jesus Christ and the Bishop, *then* I say, let the Bishop go to the Devil." I make a point of emphasising this distinction, the more so, as its misapprehension has given rise to many and foolish deductions.

The Church Congress of 1894 was held at Exeter, and thither the indefatigable Monk repaired, to voice still deeper his denunciations of those who lived upon the Church's wage and in the same breath denied what they had sworn to uphold—her Creed and Bible.

This time Dr. Barry was in the chair, and he was too much of a Christian (or a statesman) to receive the Reverend Father's request for a hearing with anything but courteous acquiescence. The public anticipated a replica of the Birmingham skirmish, but they were disappointed. Unconsciously poised shoulder to shoulder with Canon Driver, the Abbot of Llanthony was accorded a front seat on the platform, and a respectful hearing, throughout the progress of his brief but pungent speech. It was against the wolves in the fold, that the artillery of his rhetoric was directed, and in especial against the paid misleaders of future pastors of the flock, such as his unknown next-door neighbour, whose countenance, now and anon, received an inadvertent reminder from the sleeve of the orator's cowl.

Father Ignatius will always look back with feelings of respect to this Congress of '94. Whatever may have been the sentiments of his brethren of the platform, he was for

once "given his chance," a privilege which from its rarity alone, evoked a sincere sense of appreciation.

I must not turn down the page of this important year without touching upon the Reverend Father's vehement intervention anent the proposed Bill for disestablishing the Church of the Cymry. Not only with his tongue, but likewise with his pen, did the Welsh Monk express his abhorrence of a scheme which he denounced as a prospective act of "national robbery," and "an iniquitous wrong to Wales." His powerful letters on this subject were reproduced in part in several important papers, and the country received more than one reminder that her Druid Monk was not only an orator, but a champion likewise, when the cause of true patriotism was at stake.

A very real and personal sorrow also served to make this same period monumental in the Reverend Father's memories. Mrs. Lyne Stephens (a wealthy relation by marriage), who had promised that "the Monk should never want," died, leaving valuable property and a sum of £80,000 to a stranger, Father Ignatius being unmentioned in her will!

By this final disposition, Llanthony was deprived of a hope of many years' standing, and its Abbot of the anticipation of a twilight of rest, in the uninterrupted seclusion of his Monastery home.

Mrs. Lyne Stephens had confided her benevolent intention to provide the Monk with a competency at her death, to one of his nearest relatives, therefore the disappointment was doubly great, because totally unexpected.

It was not that Father Ignatius craved for riches, but he sorely longed for rest—the rest that he could never take while Llanthony depended on his Missions for its support, which alas it does, to the very day when these lines are penned.

Nevertheless, it was God's will, so he took his disillusion like a man and a Christian, turning his shoulder with redoubled energy to the wheel.

The early spring of 1895 brought with it a very

overflowing rush of labour in the Mission field. The appointment of Canon Fremantle to the Deanery of Ripon, and the quiescence with which this significant step was accepted by Church and State, were in themselves only too powerful magnets to rouse the Reverend Father from the preoccupation of his own sorrows. He determined, as the soldier of Christ, to move Heaven and earth, in order that this incomprehensible promotion should be revoked, and the National Church relieved of an officer who neither believed in nor taught her doctrines.

I have not the space, and certainly not the inclination, to devote an elaborate paragraph to the "views" of the learned Dean. These have always been expressed with the assurance of a man who has every confidence in the toleration which will be accorded, to a deliberate and brick-from-brick demolition of the traditions of Christianity. Those who desire to know more of these strange teachings, should glance through the article on the "New Reformation," penned by the (then) Canon Fremantle, in the *Fortnightly Review* of March 1887. This essay is nothing more nor less than a denial of the Nicene Creed, sweeping away under its sickle such old-world beliefs, as those of a Personal God, the Mysteries of the Incarnation, Atonement, and Resurrection of Jesus 'Christ, and all definite anticipation of Immortality, in the life of the world to come. Neither is the Bible treated with a less heavy hand. Its Inspiration is openly challenged, and its Revelation satirised, while even the Miracles of Jesus are held up as "the subject of apology." "It is only the fact," says the author, "that they are supposed to be bound up with the moral and spiritual forces of Christianity, which prevents their being treated as wholly indifferent."

This rhetorical manifesto may be regarded as a preparatory foreword to the Dean's later venture—the doctrine of "Natural Christianity"—which he has been permitted to launch and float upon the high seas of his country's Church, unhindered by Church Authority.

Lord Arthur Hervey, the late Bishop of Bath and Wells,

wrote thus sadly and prophetically of this Progression of Modern Thought: "It is not too much to say, that no teaching of an equally threatening character and subversive tendency, has appeared in the Church during the many centuries of her existence." This solemn warning was not addressed only to the readers of the "New Reformation," but to the massed forces of Higher Criticism—the army in which the writer of this famous Essay holds so distinguished a command.

Father Ignatius compresses the situation into a nutshell, and expresses himself thereon with his characteristic briskness. After penetrating with passionate pathos to the spiritual core of his expostulation, he sprinkles his summary with a few practical grains of salt.

"If," says he, "as the Fremantle party teach us, there is no Revelation and no Personal God to give us one, then Christianity must be a monstrous delusion, and the *raison d'être* of a Church dissolved. This being the case, would it not be more honest, from a purely secular point of view, if these very reverend gentlemen would cease to receive their comfortable salaries, as teachers of a Religion which they neither *do* teach nor believe?"

The public discussion of this trenchant question with both Church and State, gained the Monk of Llanthony a few more opponents in his own Communion, but it likewise brought him many openly expressed words of sympathy from Rome and Nonconformity, and also from a certain section of faithful Anglicans who were unwilling to see their Bible and Creed torn to tatters without a struggle.

The details of the Father's efforts during three consecutive years, to induce Ecclesiastical Authority to exercise a vigilant supervision over the spiritual health of its officers, would fill a volume. No other man would have attempted so hopeless a task, and no other man could have survived it. Unfortunately, the crusade was a single-handed one, and its result was obvious. Yet, in the face of defeat, the voice of protest was raised before God and man, and its echo still vibrates in the ear of Church and State. Father

Ignatius left his country no illusions respecting the green tree of Infidelity which was growing up unchecked in Christendom. Even if he did not succeed in upheaving its roots, he laid them bare to the last fibre. He appealed to the Premier to revoke the encouragement of self-avowed infidels in the Church, to the Archbishops and Bishops, his fellow-clergy and fellow-Christians. Not one stone or tiny pebble did he leave unturned in the attainment of his object. But the tide was with the world, and against God. Not a single decisive move was made, and the guns were turned against the Monk. His spiritual superiors begged him to "leave the matter to the heads of the Church" (and did nothing), and the civil authorities acknowledged his letters in the same breath with which they ignored them.

By the end of 1896, Father Ignatius had visited in person the scene of action—the diocese of Ripon—and held Missions in Leeds and Middlesbrough, the halls of Ripon itself being naturally closed against him, and the purport of his visit. He had also preluded his appearance by a printed letter sent to every member of the diocesan clergy, enclosed in an envelope bearing the scarlet heading, "Respecting the Scandal at Ripon Cathedral." This letter contained an explicit statement of the Dean's doctrines, and an exhortation to the soldiers of the Church to rise and protest against his appointment, as the holder of their Cathedral keys, on impersonal but Christian grounds. These Missions were masterpieces of labour and blessing, but at best they could only awaken an inadequate minority, when confronted with the counterpoise of an unanimous opposition. With both the Archbishop of York and the Bishop of Ripon, the Reverend Father engaged in a personal correspondence which was equally useless. Whatever expressions of sympathy were bestowed on him, were given with a prohibitive "Private" marked upon the left-hand corner, so they were no better than unspoken, and perhaps even worse.

As a final effort, and in sheer sickness of soul, the Monk penned a supreme appeal to the Pan-Anglican Synod

of 1897, entreating the Archbishops and Bishops of Great Britain to consider their obligations, with regard to a great and growing evil that was gradually poisoning their country's Faith; but this Message, like all the others, simply fluttered to the ground.

The perpetual agony and agitation of mind caused by these disappointments, became almost unendurable. Had it not been for the individual blessings which the Father saw springing up on all sides, as the fruits of his exertions, the way would indeed have seemed void before him, and his burden intolerable. But there were many warm rays of sunlight filtering in, to redeem the outside darkness. His Missions were never-ending sources of labour, but consolation, and they scintillated with touches of glory, among the shadows of these stormy years.

The Reverend Father's reappearance in the London churches had given a new throb to his popularity, and he was overwhelmed with invitations from all parts of the metropolis to preach his future Missions from parish pulpits, in lieu of the secular halls. It was impossible for so busy a worker to make the tour of London, nevertheless he found time to hold a course of Lenten services in Berkeley Chapel, Mayfair (1895), which the "Smart Set" saw fit to patronise in shoals, despite the unvarnished home truths with which the preacher was known to season his addresses. In the same year, he held a Mission for men in St. Mary, Abchurch, E.C. This service not only filled the church itself, but likewise blocked the street with the overflow of its congregation.

The appearance of Father Ignatius at Norwich during Congress Week, was likewise a feature of this same period. His standard was planted at the Church of St. Gregory, and the announcement of his Mission was the signal for a demonstration of delirious joy on the part of his faithful old friends. Both church and churchyard were transformed into seething masses of humanity, and even the belfry was besieged by a body of enterprising disciples, who ascended to this commanding position by means of a stair

which was scarcely more than a ladder. When the Incumbent of St. Gregory arrived, to assist at the evening service (during which the Monk was to preach), he found it impossible to pass through the dead wall of people gathered in hundreds round the several entrances. As a summary way out of the difficulty, his reverence suffered himself to be hoisted unceremoniously through a window, and in this way he reached the vestry, without much further inconvenience.

The closing event and climax of the nineties, was the Reverend Father's assumption of Priest's Orders at the hands of the Syrian Prelate, His Grace the Archbishop Mar Timotheus, Metropolitan for the Old Catholics in America. This ceremony was performed at Llanthony Abbey, in July 1898, another Monk of the Order receiving priestly consecration at the same time as his Superior.

It may be expected that Father Ignatius would have instructed his biographer to devote the monopoly of a chapter to this event alone, and another to the personal history of the Archbishop who administered the sacramental rite. But inasmuch as this volume purports to be a pen portrait, and that alone, it is impossible to give this important detail anything like an introspective elaboration.

His Grace Mar Timotheus having heard in America of the Monk's thirteen months' Mission in that country, took some trouble to inquire into the nature and effect of this work, and in consequence of what he learned, became warmly interested in Llanthony, and more especially in the personality of its remarkable Founder.

The Archbishop's sympathy was powerfully aroused by the fact of the Reverend Father's long Diaconate and its cause, and being a kindly man, he determined at the first opportunity to offer him the sacerdotal privilege which had been unjustly withheld by his own Bishops for thirty-eight years. When therefore, a few years later, His Grace had occasion to visit these shores, his thoughts reverted to Llanthony, and he lost no time in putting his design into

execution. The Archbishop went in person to the Abbey, made his proposition, and gave the Abbot three days in which to give his *dernier mot*.

The visit and offer of the Syrian Prelate was a surprise to Father Ignatius. Nevertheless, he saw in them the answer to the prayer of many years, for there was no prohibition of Canon Law to make such a step in a monastic Church, reprehensible in the eyes of Christendom. More than one page of monastic history shows a precedent in extra-diocesan monasteries, where the intervention of foreign Bishops had been sought for purposes of Ordination; so on the score of canonical orthodoxy, he had no need to be uneasy.

There was no time to seek the advice of friends, or even to give the matter prolonged consideration. The Monk's only resource was prayer, and upon the impulse which this cry for Light brought him, he accepted the Archbishop's offer, and received the Priesthood in direct succession from the Apostle St. Peter, whose first Chair was at Antioch.

With the personal popularity or unpopularity of his Ordinator, Father Ignatius has nothing whatever to do, and it is certainly not his intention to criticise the subsequent "attitudes" of the stranger-friend who conferred upon him a most sorely needed and gratefully appreciated benefit. His sole duty to the Church, is to certify that this Eastern Prelate was really a validly consecrated Archbishop, and competent to confer Holy Orders, through the unimpeachable authenticity of his own authority. The Reverend Father has taken every precaution to thresh this delicate matter out and out. There is no shadow of surmise resting on the validity of the Orders conferred on the Abbot of Llanthony by the Syrian dignitary. The Church of Rome would deem these Orders schismatical, (because the Syrian Church does not recognise the Papal Supremacy,) but it does not repudiate their validity. This is an important point, indeed the most important one in the whole history of the Ordination, for it means that Father Ignatius' Priest-

hood does not only hold good in Canterbury, but in the Christian world. Roman Catholics—Priests included—together with Anglicans and their clerics, do not hesitate to attend the monastic Eucharist at Llanthony.

It is important to note that the Reverend Father accepted his sacerdotal dignity for use in his Monastery only, and that he was also consecrated Mitred Abbot, His Grace Mar Timotheus solemnly placing the staff of Office in his hands.

The antiquity and vicissitudes of the Syrian Church are familiar marginals of history, nevertheless it may be as well to add, for the benefit of the reader, two rather striking developments which have been generally overlooked. Some years ago, a very learned theologian, in the plainest terms, exonerated this Syrian Church *of to-day* from the old charge of Monophysitism, or the heresy of James; and Anglican Bishops and Archbishops have subsequently gone out of their way to receive as orthodox prelates, and fraternise with, the *later* Patriarchs of the Syrian Rite. These "points" are specially noted, for the benefit of the many who would be otherwise liable (and rightly) to be aggrieved at the long continued stigma on the orthodoxy of the original Eastern Patriarchate.

A Priest from the Archbishop's House, Westminster, who happened to be the Abbot's guest at Llanthony, gave the latter a very interesting summary of the late Cardinal Vaughan's opinion, as to the validity of his (the Abbot's) Syrian Orders. "Being an Anglican," his Eminence had said, "it is very unlikely that Father Ignatius has ever been validly baptized, but, could it be shown that this was the case, the validity of his Priesthood would be unquestionable." To this reservation, the Monk replied that he had received hypothetical Baptism at the hands of Canon Prynne in St. Peter's Church, Plymouth, the week before his ordination in Wells Cathedral. The Roman Priest was persistent in urging his friend the Abbot to apply immediately for a testimony in black and white to corroborate this statement. A copy of the result of the application, (in the

shape of Canon Prynne's certificate,) will be found in one of the opening chapters of this biography.

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An official account of the Llanthony Ordinations may be obtained in pamphlet form from the Abbey. This booklet contains the life-story in miniature of the Syrian Archbishop, and a comprehensive outline of the Church from which he hails.

For the purpose of these pages, it suffices for me to state that the Monk's Ordinator, Joseph René Vilatte, was himself consecrated "Mar Timotheus, Archbishop and Metropolitan for the Old Catholics of America," in the Cathedral of Our Lady of a Good Death, Colombo, Ceylon, on the 29th of May 1892, by a special Bull of the Jacobite Patriarch of Antioch, Ignatius Peter III. The rite of Consecration was administered by Archbishop Alvarez (Mar Julius), and the Bishops of Niranam and Kottayan. The newly made Prelate had previously received the Orders of Subdeacon, Deacon, and Priest, from the Old Catholic Bishop, Dr. Hertzog, in Switzerland, on June 7th, 1885.

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In 1899 the Patriarch of Antioch suggested the consecration of Father Ignatius, as Archbishop and Metropolitan in Great Britain, for the foundation of a British Old Catholic Church, on account of the infidelity permitted by Anglican authorities. The Monk, however, declined the honour. His reason for doing so was very characteristic. He could not sever himself from his national Church so long as she retained the Nicene Creed as her test of orthodoxy.

Finally, it may be remembered that at the Brighton Congress in the early seventies, the late Bishop Durnford introduced the Syrian Patriarch to that assembly in these words:—

"The Church of England should have an especial sympathy for the Syrian Patriarch and his Church, inas-

much as (being an independent National Church) they occupy the same position in regard to the rest of Eastern Christendom, as the Anglican Communion does to the Patriarch and Church of the West.”

It is an interesting fact, that at this Congress, Father Ignatius received *as a Monk*, the formal Blessing of the Patriarch, and also that of the Syrian Bishop of Jerusalem.

CHAPTER XLIX

“GREATER LOVE HATH NO MAN”

“ ‘ Jesus Only ’ shall be
My glad watchword here ;
‘ Jesus Only ’ will be
My one treasure there.”

THE old century closed (for Llanthony) with a clamour of tongues. The Ordination of Father Ignatius to the Syrian Priesthood had struck a new vein of thought in the land. Romans, Anglicans, Dissenters, and Freethinkers were alike busy flying the kite of criticism ; and a most remarkable appendix to this volume might be furnished by the massed opinions of these several factions, carefully classified, and presented under specific headings.

There was only one silent Member in all this conflict-ing Parliament, and that was the Reverend Father himself. When once he had committed a single statement of his case to the columns of the *Hereford Times*, he considered that on his side at least the debate was ended. This official manifesto safely launched, the Abbot of Llanthony quietly resumed his work in his Monastery and in the world, with an equanimity that was absolutely impervious to the storms of argument that were saturating the Press at his expense.

It will be noticed that with regard to his purely personal interests, or injuries, Father Ignatius has ever been slow to leave his shell of reticence. He has reserved “ the lion ” almost entirely for his Master’s battles. So he left these outside voices uninterrupted, to wear and tear the topic of his Ordination, until such time as some newer excitement should supervene, and whirl away its dust out of mind.

With the dawn of the New Century came an influx of public work. The Reverend Father emphasised the first New Year by a Message to the People, in the form of a Letter of Greeting, published in the *Hereford Times*, and circulated all over the country. This Letter was written with a double purpose, not only to convey kind Christian wishes, but a still kinder Christian warning. The People of Britain were bidden to beware of the Spirit of Unfaith in their Church, and to go forth to meet and quell it, by a determined rally round their Bible and the sacred creeds of Christendom.

There must have been a ring of prophecy in the Monk's earnest words. That Lent, the Dean of Ripon was announced as the season's preacher at Hereford Cathedral. It was in vain that the Reverend Father appealed to the Bishop and Dean to revoke their decision. His protest remained unheeded, and Dean Fremantle was left a free hand to prepare the souls of Hereford for the solemn anniversaries of the Atonement and Resurrection—a strange and suggestive choice.

Father Ignatius is, and ever will be, an intensely loyal subject, therefore the passing of his Queen—the Great White Queen—was to him a source of deep personal sorrow. Masses were said for her repose at Llanthony, and the Abbot tolled the bell for his Sovereign Lady, with his own hand.

As a sample of the Reverend Father's refreshing large-mindedness, I must record the special feature of a Mission held by him at Abergavenny in 1901, that feature being the distribution of the funds raised by strenuous personal effort. The money taken for the "seats" was devoted to the local Hospital, while the sum total of all the collections, was equally divided between the Roman priest, the Anglican clergyman, and the Baptist minister. This is such a true touch of the Father's individuality, such a keynote to his preaching and practice, that I cannot pass it by without a word.

Another memorable detail of 1901 was the Mission of

the Monk of Llanthony to the Welsh miners. This was an experience in itself—the contact with men who lived half their lives above ground and half under it—but its result was glorious. The Reverend Father made a point of driving through this representative district, in order to bring himself into closer touch with its natives, and he was rewarded. His sermons were listened to with an attention which he himself describes as “truly awful” and a “psychic revelation.” I myself have heard the Father address the miners, (and the Jews,) at Merthyr Tydfil, with the same result. It is a mistake to imagine that his oratory is “over the heads” of the working classes. Circumstances have induced him to dedicate his Missions more especially to the uncanvassed “upper ten,” but he possesses the genius of adaptability, which places him in focus with everything and everybody under God’s sun. Herein lies the secret of his sway as a Missioner—his innate power of grasping and manipulating the atmosphere of the moment.

In 1902 the Rev. Charles Gore received the Mitre of Worcester in the private Chapel of Lambeth Palace, and in presence of a select circle of sixty persons. A more public consecration was not deemed advisable, owing to a few scattered, but at the same time demonstrative scruples, entertained as to the equity of this appointment.

Father Ignatius had long ago learned the futility of protest, nevertheless, as a satisfaction to his own conscience, he never failed to speak the word when occasion demanded it.

Soon after his consecration, Dr. Gore decided to go to Birmingham, in the course of a circuit in his new diocese, and the Reverend Father being apprised of his intention, determined to hold a simultaneous Mission in the same city. This purpose was put into practice, and by a curious coincidence, the Monk’s lodgings happened to be exactly opposite the church where the lately appointed Bishop was preaching—an unsympathetic proximity which could hardly have been pleasant to either party.

The Reverend Father’s Mission was held for the express

object of affording the citizens of Birmingham an unveiled insight into the theological opinions of their newly appointed Bishop, and both the announcements and letters with which he heralded his appearance, were clearly indicative of this important aim. Father Ignatius is not the man to strike his opponent between the shoulders, and in the silence of the night. His methods are those of broad daylight, a face-to-face encounter, and a sword driven home to the hilt.

This visit to Birmingham was a remarkable episode, and more reminiscent of some popular upheaval in a Southern city of centuries ago, than a modern occurrence in cool, commercial England. Hundreds in the town vibrated with the solemnity of the Monk's challenge to their Christianity, their logical intelligence, and their British sense of justice. These gathered themselves together, and sat at the Missioner's feet, but the rest of the city remained indifferent. The scenes within the Hall were memorable. The Father's orations were listened to by crowds of devout persons, and interspersed with bursts of applause, cries of "Alleluia!" and those inarticulate waves of emotion, which sweep like blasts of wind over any impassioned assembly that is held in silence by the magnet of a single voice.

Father Ignatius had spared himself neither in body nor soul. He had warned the Church of her danger, her Apostolic leaders of their obligations, and the People of England of the threatened mutilation of their Bible and their beliefs. He had likewise penned a second appeal to the headquarters of civic power—the Premier of the Ministerial Cabinet; but in every case his words had returned to him with the barrenness of their own echo. "Is it nothing to you, ye that pass by?" and Silence had answered, "It *is* nothing."

It may interest the reader to know that only a few days after the Monk's return to London, from his campaign at Birmingham, he was "approached" for the first time on the subject of this biography. In the autumn of the same year, was entrusted to my hands the great privilege and responsibility of presenting the public with a few, and only

a few, leading threads, drawn carefully and prayerfully from a huge skein of intricate, storm-tangled incident.

For the last two years, the Reverend Father's labours have been, if possible, more arduous than ever, for they have involved a new preoccupation in the preparation of this book, and a fiery warfare with its overplus of material. This agony of condensation has been to him the hardest work of all. Nevertheless, he has met it with consummate patience, and pulled it through, without detriment to his duties as monastic Superior, and with but few blanks in the fulfilment of promised Missions.

To this day, this very hour, he is living the life of divided duty—his soul in his Monastery, his heart in his Missions, and both merged indissolubly into the same sublime Ideal—Jesus Only. Pax.

As far as human eye can pierce the future, Father Ignatius can look forward to no assured rest in the gloaming of his life. Llanthony is still almost entirely unendowed, and dependent on his individual efforts to keep the lamp burning. The Reverend Father's private fortune was unfortunately sunk (as the reader will remember) in the Norwich lawsuit detailed in these earlier chapters. All the money he has since had to depend on, has been derived entirely from his Missions or the gifts of friends. With the exception of a deplorably small sum which has been rigorously set aside and placed at interest, the Abbey is absolutely without an independent source of income. Though in very many ways the All-Wise Master has so signally blessed the Monk's work and ministry, yet for some inscrutable reason He has never yet raised him up a rich friend. Those who love Llanthony best, are the least able to contribute substantially to its welfare; and this being the case, it is solely on the Reverend Father's shoulders that this heavy burden rests—the responsibility of earning the needful for the maintenance of his religious House and Church.

I am especially anxious to convey to the reader a very definite idea of this state of things. There is an erroneous



A CHARACTERISTIC GROUP ON THE MONKS' LEVEL, LIANTHONY



report abroad, that the Abbot of Llanthony is a rich man, and that he has inherited a goodly portion of the property of his wealthy relative, Mrs. Lyne Stephens. Both these assertions are out and out fictions. With the exception of the modicum invested, the Reverend Father has no personal means whatsoever, and he was not bequeathed as much as a farthing by the deceased lady in question. Llanthony as it now stands, is absolutely dependent on its Founder, and unless God see fit to put it into the heart of some well-to-do Christian to lift this load or share it, there is no probability of the Father being able to take even a partial rest from his ceaseless love-labour of nearly half a century.

The above may perhaps appear a somewhat crude statement. It is nevertheless an accurate one. According to present dispositions, Father Ignatius bequeaths Llanthony to the people of his prayers—Anglican Monks. Some years back, Lord Halifax assisted into being, an Olivetan congregation of Anglo-Benedictines, and later on he gave them as a Settlement, a picturesque manor house on his own estate, now known as "Painsthorpe Abbey." It is to these religious—so long as there are *two* members of the Order extant to keep the Rule—that Llanthony will eventually pass. Failing them, the property will revert unconditionally to the (Roman) Benedictines of Buckfast Leigh, Devonshire.

The bare fact of the existence of a second Anglican Monastery, is in itself a supplementary crown to the Reverend Father's hardly-won victory. Were the subject less solemn, he would surely be tempted to laugh outright at the "then" and "now" of Time and Bishops, with regard to their ancient and modern toleration of the "absurd dress."

Remembering his own years of opprobrium and persecution, the authorisation as Abbot, of his colleague (the latter-day Superior) by the Southern Primate, and his consecration, likewise as Abbot, by an Anglican Prelate, must suggest a personal comparison between kicks and halfpence, not devoid of a funny side.

But Father Ignatius is too devoted a Monk to resent this aspect of the question. He merely thanks God that the Shadow which he has given his life to resurrect in his Church, is at length assuming flesh and blood development. It matters not to him, that his own hands have had to hew the rocks and dig the paths of the revival. His reward is in the knowledge that these rocks are now foundations, and the paths growing smooth with the tread of sandalled feet. Whether the Church of England is grateful for the gift or not, Father Ignatius has given her back her Monks. Llanthony the Mother House, and Painthorpe her Benjamin, are stone and mortar monuments of the realisation of this dream.

There will never be another Father Ignatius !

The world will have its great preachers, its devout religious, and its gifted players on the human heart-strings, but it can never reproduce an identical incarnation, capable of similar thoughts, deeds, and feelings.

God does not commit His earthly ministrations to angels, but to men, and it is with no sickly desire to apotheosise, that I offer the Reverend Father the tribute of these closing lines.

The Abbot of Llanthony would be nothing were he not magnificently human. A very few words condense his introspective analysis. He is the possessor of three distinctive and complete selves—the Preacher, the Monk, and the Personality. These three, but the greatest of these is the Personality.

This Personality can only be described as oceanic—perhaps a strange term, and yet appropriate, for it expresses an illimitable stretch of ripples, depths, and changelessness, the leading attributes of the Monk-Missioner's inner man. Two qualities above all others have given him leadership in the world, and these are his exuberant sympathy, and the undeviating consistency of a Christianity professed and practised in every detail of daily life. The magnetism of Father Ignatius, is to be found in the "Jesus

Only" of his every thought, word, and deed. This is the secret of his influence over souls, and the far-away reach of his achievements.

Few people are aware how much the Monk of Llanthony *has* achieved in one way and another, during his busy walk upon earth. The public is so accustomed to think of him as the orator-enthusiast, the famous ascetic, whose name has been passed from lip to lip under so many and different circumstances, that it has forgotten to inquire into the national results filtering through contemporary history, from this lifelong work and watchfulness.

The Restoration of the Monastic Institution is not the only footprint which the Reverend Father has trodden into the sands of Time. He has done another equally great work, in creating an Evangelical atmosphere over the whole body of Anglican Catholicism, and popularising amongst Christian Protestants, the use and appreciation of Catholic externals. But above all, and perhaps better than all, he has laboured successfully to raise and deepen the spiritual life of those serving in the House of Prayer. This glorious privilege is attested by innumerable "letters of blessing" too sacred for publication, and penned in terms which alone should send their receiver happy to his rest. Roman priests, English clergy, and Nonconformist ministers, have alike come in darkness to Llanthony, and carried away with them the Great Light. Even the little book of hymns, known as the *Llanthony Mission Hymns*, has had its own persuasive voice—one of those still small voices which are heard and loved in far-away lands, and whose whispers will never die out. Both from the Church Visible and the busy world, God has allowed His good and faithful servant to call out a people for Himself.

This is the national side of the record. Its individual scope is almost impossible to measure. Rich and poor, young and old, Father Ignatius has opened the Golden Gates to a multitude whom no man shall ever number—upon earth—and the stream is still swelling, and passing onward—upward!

There will never be another Father Ignatius!

To appreciate and realise this forecast, an admission to the "within" is a *sine quâ non*. We must turn the lights on Llanthony and on its Abbot, in his "off" moments, the simplest and in some ways the greatest in his life. Here we see the intimate details of the picture, and we come face to face with the solitary, the religious, the humanitarian, to whom no one and nothing that God has created, seems insignificant or unworthy of sympathy. Few on this earth know Nature's music by heart so thoroughly as our Reverend Father. To him, every feeble throb of life has its own significance, and each little bird or flower is a living echo of the great Creation Hymn, breathed out everlastingly before "the One Who thought His Beautiful Works into being."

Whether on the Mission platform, or at the bedside of the dying, whether in the hush of his Monastery Church, or among the field flowers in his green meadows, Father Ignatius is precisely the same man, the same simple Christian, the same warm sympathiser, and the same messenger bearing the eternal Message of Reconciliation—"Whosoever *will*, let him come."

His life has but one obsession—"Jesus Only," and this obsession has its threefold heart—a passionate love, a child-like faith, and a longing at every moment, to say, do, or think, what may be for his Master's glory.

This is the innermost lining of the Monk's personality—a great overwhelming love, the love that has "laid down" a life.

And from dawn to twilight, that love has never wavered. It folded the mantle of predestination round the little mystic child, and it soothed the agony of the man's obedience to his call. By love alone, the weary way has been trodden, poverty and persecution survived, and wrongs forgiven until seventy times seven. Nothing has been spared, nothing kept back. All has been required, and all has been given. The offering if imperfect, is complete.

And the love-story of Ignatius of Jesus is complete

also—"as it were a tale that is told." My pen pauses at the present hour, and in that pause the scene fades out, and the lights are shifted, leaving the central figure alone upon the screen.

This is my closing picture—the Monk-Missioner working and waiting for his Lord. *Working*, in the ripeness of his years and inspirations, and *waiting* for the promise which shall surely be his—that exquisite promise reserved by "Jesus Only" for the one "that overcometh, and keepeth His works unto the end"—

"I will give him the Morning Star."

FINIS.

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